







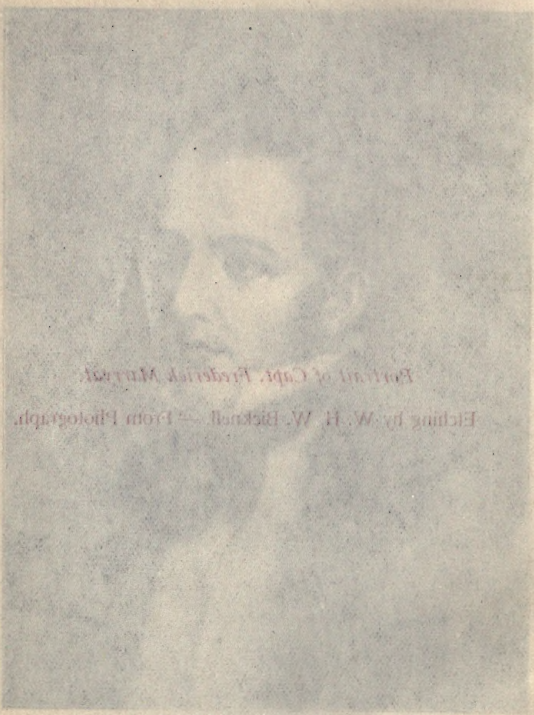








Wm. B. Beckwith del.



Portrait of Capt. Frederick Murray.  
Etching by W. H. W. Bicknell — from Photograph.

Illustrated Sterling Edition

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THE KING'S OWN  
—  
THE PIRATE  
—  
THE THREE CUTTERS

BY  
CAPTAIN FREDERICK MARRYAT

With Introduction by  
W. L. COURTNEY, M. A., LL. D.



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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

IF in the case of some novelists it makes little or no difference what their private life and personal experience have been, there are many others whose existence we ought to know with fair intimacy, before we can even begin to understand their work. Captain Marryat assuredly belongs to the latter class. If we are to put ourselves at the right point of view to estimate those novels by which he lives—"Peter Simple," "Mr. Midshipman Easy," "The King's Own," and others whose titles are household names—it is necessary to have some general acquaintance with those stirring times of his life which lie between 1806 and 1815. Fortunately enough—because the materials for Captain Marryat's life are strangely scanty—he has told us a great deal of his personal history in "Frank Mildmay." The author energetically denied that he was in his first published book drawing his own portrait, for the best of reasons, because his hero is by no means a perfect young gentleman, such as the ordinary reader would be likely to take to his heart. Nor, perhaps, would some of the other personages who figure in the tale be precisely the models which his contemporaries would gladly accept for themselves. Let us grant, by all means, that Frank Mildmay is not Frederick Marryat, and that the officers and messmates with whom he was brought into contact are not literally and precisely the comrades of the author's youthful years. The incidents, however, remain, whatever else we take away, and "The Adventures of a Naval Officer" is full of the experience which was gained by the spirited young midshipman on board the *Impérieuse*, under Captain Lord Cochrane, afterwards Earl of

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Dundonald. Marryat had run away three times from school before he attained his ambition, and was allowed to go to sea. His father, Joseph Marryat, a prosperous man, who was M.P. for Sandwich and chairman of the committee of Lloyds, does not seem to have been a very sympathetic parent, and the youth's schooldays, so far as we can judge from the allusions to school life in the novels, were anything but happy. It was in September 1806 that he gained his proud position on the quarter-deck of the frigate *Impérieuse*, and he was then fourteen years old.

For the purposes of a general introduction the early life of Marryat is all that is of real consequence—from the age of fourteen to the age of thirty-four, when he became a post-captain, and was given the Companionship of the Bath. The later period, to the time of his death in 1848, is by no means so pleasant to contemplate. It is full of restlessness and discontent, chequered by not a few disasters and illnesses, and embittered by more than an occasional want of money. He was producing book after book with magnificent prodigality, and he was enjoying the summer tide of his popularity, but the materials which made his literary productiveness possible were all, or nearly all, amassed in the earlier part of his career, and such happiness and contentment as came in his way were enjoyed in his early manhood. The first voyages under Cochrane are in themselves a romance of the ocean. Entering the navy at a time when, from Trafalgar onwards, it was for the rest of the great war with France the acknowledged mistress of the sea, Marryat was equally fortunate in his ship and his commander. The *Impérieuse* was one of the smartest frigates afloat, and Lord Cochrane one of the most brilliant of English officers. "Mr. Midshipman Easy," "Peter Simple," "Frank Mildmay," "The King's Own" are full of the English Channel, and the Mediterranean, the coasts of France and Spain, and America and the West Indies. It was under Cochrane, and afterwards in the *Æolus*, the *Spartan*, the *Espiègle*, the *Beaver*, and the *Rosario*, that all



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the wonderful experiences were gained which were turned subsequently to such excellent account. On September 30th, 1811, the *Æolus* was, during a furious gale of wind, laid on her beam-ends, with top-masts and mizen-masts blown away, and Marryat succeeded in the perilous task of cutting away the main-yard. The incident is retold in the pages of "Frank Mildmay." The tremendous shipwreck in "The King's Own" is also a fragment of real history, of which Lord Exmouth was the hero. So it is with a host of other incidents, such as the defence of Rosas on the Spanish coast in the Peninsular War, the capture of the privateer in Almeria Bay, the accident by which Marryat was knocked down by the body of the first lieutenant in front of him in a boarding affray and very nearly killed by the trampling feet of his followers, and many other exploits and misfortunes too numerous to mention. The future novelist had a retentive memory and a quick eye for useful incidents. If the lines of his early life had fallen in other places, he might still have been a novelist, for the writing propensity was very strong within him: but assuredly his novels would have been very different.

It will be as well, perhaps, in however cursory a fashion, to enumerate some of these earlier voyages, on which so much depends. Not much is to be said about the first expedition under Lord Cochrane, which began at the end of 1806, except that the frigate was very nearly wrecked off Ushant, and that the cruise was confined to the French coast. In the second, in September of the next year, the *Impérieuse* joined Lord Collingwood's fleet in the Mediterranean, and Marryat gained a good deal of that experience at Malta which he was afterwards to utilise in the history of Mr. Midshipman Easy. From Malta the frigate went to Corsica, where a dashing action took place with a Maltese privateer: thence to Toulon, back again to the Ionian Islands, and finally home. The third of Cochrane's expeditions began early in 1808, when the *Impérieuse* was on service off the

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coast of Spain, and saw many brilliant operations during the continuance of the Peninsular War. Let it not be forgotten that his captain made an extraordinary impression on the young novelist's mind. Lord Cochrane was not perhaps the most ideal of men, so far as his relations to Parliament and the Admiralty were concerned, but he was at his best on the quarter-deck. Marryat has drawn him at least twice, as Captain M—— in "The King's Own," and Captain Savage of the *Diomedé* in "Peter Simple." What especially struck him was the combination of daring with judgment, dauntless heroism united with the most scrupulous care for human life. As soon as Cochrane was superseded from the *Impérieuse*, Marryat went through a number of naval adventures under other captains, in the course of which he made acquaintance with the eastern coast of America, Barbadoes, and the West Indies. The only important event to chronicle is the proof of a constitutional weakness which subsequently was fatal to him. In 1813, while serving in *L'Espiègle* on the north coast of South America, he was invalided home, owing to the breaking of a bloodvessel, a misfortune which occurred to him a good many times in his subsequent career until the end came in 1848.

For many reasons the years which elapsed from 1815 onwards may be passed over with but slight mention. After a marriage with Miss Shairp, in January 1819, he was on guard duty at St. Helena, at the time when Napoleon was looking forward to the end of his last imprisonment. In the *Rosario*, it was his business to cruise for smugglers. He made no little use of the knowledge he thus acquired in his picture of M'Elvina and Captain Debriseau in "The King's Own." The Burmese War, in 1824 and 1825, afforded many opportunities for distinction, as a result of which he gained post rank and a C.B. But in 1830 he resigned the command of the *Ariadne*, his last ship, and thenceforward devoted himself to literature and the management of his private affairs. He was far more successful, however, as a novelist

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than as a man of business. Whether in Sussex House, Hammersmith, or at Langham in Norfolk, he seems steadily to have lost money—partly owing to the failure of a property in the West Indies—but his books brought him in large sums, and his industry was enormous. From 1830 to 1837, when he went on a visit to America, he had produced ten stories—"Frank Mildmay," "The King's Own," "Newton Forster," "Peter Simple," "Jacob Faithful," "The Pacha of Many Tales," "Mr. Midshipman Easy," "Japhet in Search of a Father," "The Pirate and the Three Cutters," and "Snarleywow," besides two technical works,—one on the Abolition of Impressment, the other a detailed scheme for a new code of signals. The tour in Canada and in the United States led to the publication of "A Diary in America," hardly a successful venture, and an admirable story on the Old Vanderdecken legend, entitled "The Phantom Ship." But none of the later stories, even including "Masterman Ready," can be compared with those issued between 1830 and 1837, most of which saw the light in the *Metropolitan Magazine*, of which Marryat was for some time editor. "Masterman Ready" is, in reality, the first of a new department of literature—books for children, to which the author now began to devote himself. Marryat was at Langham when he poured out, in rapid succession, "The Travels and Adventures of Monsieur Violet," "The Settlers in Canada," "The Mission," "The Children of the New Forest," and "The Little Savage." "Valérie" seems to have been written while he was dying. His actual demise was undoubtedly hastened by the sad news of the loss of his son, Lieutenant Frederic Marryat, who perished in the wreck of the *Avenger* in the Mediterranean. Our author himself passed away quietly in the early morning of August 9, 1848.

Marryat's character is not difficult to estimate, despite the scantiness of the records. His daughter, who gives us the best picture of him, neither disguises his points of weakness nor ignores his true strength. Like his old commander,



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Lord Cochrane, Captain Marryat is obviously at his best on board ship ; if these naval heroes are put on shore, they are apt to exhibit a certain explosiveness of temperament which does not always accord with the best traditions of civilised society, and which sometimes prevents them from gaining that general consideration which is their due. Captain Marryat had his fair share of squabbles, literary and personal, and he behaved throughout them with a spirit a little too cavalier to be called Christian. We need not trouble ourselves with incidents which are of no value except to the picker-up of unconsidered trifles. It is more pleasant to notice that in his own home, and by his own children, our author was a good deal more adored than feared. He had that sublime impolicy in the management of his family which is often more successful than practical common-sense would suppose. With a great parade of punitive severity, he betrayed an engaging amount of paternal weakness. At the termination of each week at Langham it was his habit to interview his children, accompanied by their governess, in order to receive, with such solemnity as he could muster, the seven days' report of conduct and diligence. The unco guid received a prize for obvious reasons ; the desperately naughty also received a prize in order to tempt them to be better, and, lastly, the governess herself received a prize, in order that her criticism on this equivocal justice might be forestalled. Of course they all loved him, although they reserved to themselves a certain liberty of judgment. If a child had torn its dress, the culprit went as a matter of course to the father, who, on one occasion at all events, tore off the major portion of the skirt in order to take upon his own shoulders the blame for the misdeed. When a character of this description has to manage an estate in Norfolk, the receipts are not likely to be excessive ; but the man himself is sure to be remembered, not only by his tenants and retainers, but also by the ex-poachers whom he converted into gamekeepers.

It is pleasant to remember such traits as these, because

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they give us the right standpoint from which to estimate Captain Marryat's literary work. It is not probable that such a nature could be in the truest sense either artistic or literary. Of all that goes to the formation of a plot, of constructive and technical ability, Captain Marryat had but little share; as a rule his novels go on, as it were, of their own accord, the incidents succeeding each other in prodigal variety, the *dramatis personæ* coming on and off the scene without any particular attention to the rules of the game. Of all his books perhaps two, "The King's Own" and "Snarleyyow," are the only ones which betray that preliminary labour of involution which ought to precede the evolution of the story. There is a plot undoubtedly in "The King's Own," and there is some good construction in "Snarleyyow;" the rest are flying pages, torn from a naval officer's journal, written *currente calamo*, as opportunity and the pressing necessity for money dictated. On the other hand, because Captain Marryat was universally popular, he would be almost sure to sympathise with and understand very different varieties of character. Next to Dickens, he has drawn men who live in the national memory. Every schoolboy—at all events, every schoolboy of thirty years ago—knows, as if they were his own familiar friends, Mr. Midshipman Easy, Terence O'Brien, Equality Jack, and the immortal Mr. Chucks.

The sense of fun is more obvious in these novels than the rarer and more lasting gift of humour. Pages could be quoted to prove the author's own enjoyment in his creations, and in those incidents where they figure. Mr. Easy and his reliance on the articles of war, quoted by Mr. David Hannay in his admirable little memoir of Frederick Marryat, form an obvious instance. Apart from this, however, which after all is due rather to an exuberant temperament than to those qualities we look for in a novelist, there is a simple straightforward power of description which cannot be overpraised. It is of course true that Marryat worked up his own experience into graphic and descriptive scenes; but they never show signs of

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excessive elaboration, they are never strained or theatrical, and the effect is due rather to a few subtle touches than to the conscious desire to write purple passages. The club-hauling of the *Diomedé* in "Peter Simple," the fight between the *Aurora* and the *Trident* in "Midshipman Easy," the account of the hurricane on the coast of S. Pierre, once more in "Peter Simple," and the destruction of the French ship at the end of "The King's Own," are all admirable examples of a skill which, because it is apparently so easy, is not the less worthy of praise. What one lacks in Captain Marryat is not the narrative ability, but the poetic sense. There is little or no suggestion of that terror and mystery of the sea which are sometimes found in Victor Hugo and in the "Pêcheur d'Islande" of Pierre Loti.

We must not, however, ask from this novelist more than he could give us, and he has given us so much, that ingratitude would be particularly base. As compared, for instance, with Fenimore Cooper, we see at once his advantage, and although Mr. Clark Russell has written one book, "The Wreck of the Grosvenor," which is worthy to stand with Marryat's novels, on the whole he is a lesser artist. We need not concern ourselves with the depreciative criticism, either of Carlyle, who seems to have written of him under an access of bile, or of Edgar Allan Poe, who declared that his ideas were essentially mediocre, and the common property of the mob. Washington Irving, Christopher North, Lockhart, and Thackeray, all in their various ways did him justice. In the history of English literature it is the glory of Captain Marryat to stand half-way between Smollett and Dickens, inferior, it is true, to either writer, but still worthily handing on a tradition, and inaugurating in his chivalry of the ocean "a new region," as Washington Irving said, "of fiction and romance."

W. L. COURTNEY.

January 1896.

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ALTHOUGH Captain Marryat's first appearance in the world of fiction was signalised by the publication in 1829 of "The Adventures of a Naval Officer, or Frank Mildmay," there seems no reason to doubt that "The King's Own" was composed at an earlier date. It was originally produced in the *Metropolitan Magazine* at a time when the author was getting all that he could for thoroughly hard and conscientious work, at the remuneration of £16 a sheet—very fair magazine pay. He was offered the editorship about this period of a new Radical review designed on the lines of the *United Service Journal*, but Mr. Bentley's proposals in this direction were rejected for the editorship of the *Metropolitan*, which he assumed in 1832, and in which for four or five years after this date he allowed the major part of his work to appear. At what precise time of his life he wrote "The King's Own" it is difficult to say, but there are one or two bits of personal history in the story which appear to prove that he was at the time on active service. In Chapter xxii., for instance, he says, "I am seated in the after-cabin of a vessel endowed with as liberal a share of motion as any in his Majesty's service. Whilst I write, I am holding on by the table, my legs entwined in the lashings underneath, and I can barely manage to keep my position before my manuscript." The rest of the passage is interesting, because it explains what it was that induced the youthful Marryat to go to sea. "It was not to escape the drudgery and confinement of a school, or the admonitions received at home. The battle of Trafalgar had been fought." After witnessing the

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funeral procession of Lord Nelson the author determined that he too would, if possible, be buried in the same manner; death could have no terrors if followed by so gorgeous a recompense. "I had no idea at that time," he adds, "that it was such a terrible roundabout way to St. Paul's. Here I have been tossed about in every quarter of the globe for between twenty and five-and-twenty years, and the dome is almost as distant as ever. I mean to put up with the family vault; but I should like very much to have engraved on my coffin, 'Many years Commissioner,' or 'Lord of the Admiralty,' or 'Governor of Greenwich Hospital,' 'Ambassador,' 'Privy Councillor,' or, in fact, anything but Captain; for though acknowledged to be a good travelling name, it is a very insignificant title at the end of our journey." As Captain Marryat went to sea in 1806, from twenty to twenty-five years gives us somewhere about 1828 for the composition of this story.

As distinguished from the other novels, with the possible exception of "Snarleywow," "The King's Own" has a definite plot—a tolerably obvious one, it is true, but evidently thought out, and, in his naïve way, acknowledged by the author towards the end of the book as a good subject for a novel. But the boy who has imprinted on his shoulder the broad arrow which designates him for the king's service, and who is the heir to a large estate, is more the nominal than the real hero. William Seymour is, in truth, a somewhat colourless young man, and, as is the customary rule in Marryat's novels, the main interest lies in the picturesque incidents and in the studies of character so plentifully besprinkled over his pages. More than once Marryat protests against the idea that he is describing acquaintances of his own, yet there must be a good deal of Cochrane in Captain M—— of the *Aspasia*, and it is difficult to conceive that a man like Captain Capperbar was otherwise than a caricature of some well-known personage. M'Elvina and Debriseau were obviously suggested by Marryat's own experiences of smugglers. There is a long passage in Chapter ix., containing notes about the smuggling trade

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between the port of Cherbourg and the English coast. Our author is fond of these little disquisitions: he gives us, for instance, an essay on the way in which Sunday is kept on board ship, as well as on the various kinds of courage, which remind us not so much of the practised novelist as of the thoughtful amateur. But there is perhaps only one chapter which clearly conveys the suggestion that "The King's Own" appeared serially in a magazine. Chapter xxxvii. has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the story, and looks as if that £16 a sheet, which was the rate of emolument, was a consideration of no little importance. Here is the apology: "It's a very awkward position to have to write a chapter of sixteen pages without materials for more than two; at least I find it so;" or again, "I think I hear the reader say, 'All this may be very true, but what has it to do with the novel?' Nothing, I grant, but it has a great deal to do with making a book, for I have completed a whole chapter out of nothing."

The most celebrated passage in the work is without doubt the description of the terrible sea-fight in the midst of a raging storm between the *Aspasia* and a French ship, which occupies Chapters li.-liv. It is an extremely vivid piece of description, written with all that easy mastery of his facts which so practised a seaman had at his command. It is not pure invention, however; it is a highly elaborated version of a historical event, of which the hero was Edward Pellew, Viscount Exmouth. Pellew was in command of the *Indefatigable* in company with another frigate, the *Amazon*, when, late in the afternoon of the 13th January 1797, he fell in with the French 74-gun ship, *Droits de l'Homme*, belonging to the fleet which had sailed out of French harbours December 16, 1796, and had been dispersed on the Irish coast. A furious gale was blowing at the time, and the *Droits de l'Homme*, with her fore and main topmasts carried away, rolled so heavily that she could not open her lower deck ports. All through the night the two frigates and the



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French vessel waged furious battle in the midst of a hurricane. Just before daybreak the scene of the conflict was in Audierne Bay, the wind blowing dead on shore and a heavy sea rolling in. Pellew's frigate, the *Indefatigable*, succeeded in beating out of the Bay, the *Amazon* and the *Droits de l'Homme* both struck on the rocks on the morning of the 14th of January. The loss of life, according to Professor Laughton, who has narrated the incident, was differently stated in the English and French accounts. According to the latter, there were on board the *Droits de l'Homme* 1280 men, of whom 960 were saved, 103 killed by the frigates' fire, and 217 lost in the wreck. The English account is probably exaggerated, for it declares that out of 1750 on board, 1350 Frenchmen were lost. Captain Marryat, it will be observed, makes his combatants wrecked on the Irish coast in very similar fashion, although in his pages the fight is a duel, and not a triangular combat.

When "The King's Own" appeared, there was a remarkable unanimity in praise of Captain Marryat's literary achievement. It was published in three volumes post-octavo in 1830. The *Edinburgh Review* called it an excellent novel, the *United Service Magazine* declared that the author might take his place at the head of the naval novelists of the day. The *Spectator* was still more enthusiastic: "The King's Own," it said, "is perhaps not to be equalled in the whole round of romance." Certainly it deserves to be classed amongst Marryat's best works; but its popularity has not been as great as that of "Peter Simple," "Mr. Midshipman Easy," and "Snarleyow."

W. L. COURTNEY.

January 1896.

# THE KING'S OWN

## CHAPTER I

However boldly their warm blood was spilt,  
Their life was shame, their epitaph was guilt ;  
And this they knew and felt, at least the one,  
The leader of the band he had undone,—  
Who, born for better things, had madly set  
His life upon a cast, which linger'd yet.

BYRON.

THERE is perhaps no event in the annals of our history which excited more alarm at the time of its occurrence, or has since been the subject of more general interest, than the Mutiny at the Nore in the year 1797. Forty thousand men, to whom the nation looked for defence from its surrounding enemies, and in steadfast reliance upon whose bravery it lay down every night in tranquillity,—men who had dared everything for their king and country, and in whose breasts patriotism, although suppressed for the time, could never be extinguished,—irritated by ungrateful neglect on the one hand, and by seditious advisers on the other, turned the guns which they had so often manned in defence of the English flag against their own countrymen and their own home, and, with all the acrimony of feeling ever attending family quarrels, seemed determined to sacrifice the nation and themselves, rather than listen to the dictates of reason and of conscience.

Doubtless there is a point at which endurance of oppression ceases to be a virtue, and rebellion can no longer be considered as a crime ; but it is a dangerous and intricate problem, the solution of which had better not be attempted. It must, however, be acknowledged that the seamen, on the

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occasion of the first mutiny, had just grounds of complaint, and that they did not proceed to acts of violence until repeated and humble remonstrance had been made in vain.

Whether we act in a body or individually, such is the infirmity and selfishness of human nature, that we often surrender to importunity that which we refuse to the dictates of gratitude,—yielding, for our own comfort, to the demands of turbulence, while quiet unpretending merit is overlooked and oppressed, until, roused by neglect, it demands as a right what policy alone should have granted as a favour.

Such was the behaviour, on the part of Government, which produced the mutiny at the Nore.

What mechanism is more complex than the mind of man? And as, in all machinery, there are wheels and springs of action not apparent without close examination of the interior, so pride, ambition, avarice, love, play alternately or conjointly upon the human mind, which, under their influence, is whirled round like the weathercock in the hurricane, only pointing for a short time in one direction, but for that time steadfastly. How difficult, then, to analyse the motives and inducements which actuated the several ringleaders in this dreadful crisis!

Let us, therefore, confine ourselves to what we do really know to have been the origin of discontent in one of these men, whose unfortunate career is intimately connected with this history.

Edward Peters was a man of talent and education. He had entered on board the —— in a fit of desperation, to obtain the bounty for a present support, and his pay as a future provision for his wife and an only child, the fruit of a hasty and unfortunate marriage. He was soon distinguished as a person of superior attainments; and instead of being employed, as a landsman usually is, in the afterguard or waist of the ship, he was placed under the orders of the purser and captain's clerk as an amanuensis. In this capacity he remained two or three years, approved of and treated with unusual respect by the officers, for his gentlemanlike appearance and behaviour: but unfortunately a theft had been committed,—a watch, of trifling value, had been purloined from the purser's cabin; and as he was the only person, with the exception of the servant, who had free ingress and egress,

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suspicion fell upon him—the more so as, after every search that could be made had proved ineffectual, it was supposed that the purloined property had been sent on shore to be disposed of by his wife, who, with his child, had frequently been permitted to visit him on board.

Summoned on the quarter-deck—cross-examined, and harshly interrogated—called a scoundrel by the captain before conviction,—the proud blood mantled in the cheeks of one who, at that period, was incapable of crime. The blush of virtuous indignation was construed into presumptive evidence of guilt. The captain,—a superficial, presuming, pompous, yet cowardly creature, whose conduct assisted in no small degree to excite the mutiny on board of his own ship,—declared himself quite convinced of Peters's guilt, because he blushed at the bare idea of being suspected; and punishment ensued, with all the degradation allotted to an offence which is never forgiven on board of a man-of-war.

There is, perhaps, no crime that is attended with such serious consequences on board a ship as theft. A succession of thefts undiscovered will disintegrate a ship's company, break up the messes, destroy all confidence and harmony, and occasion those who have been the dearest friends to become the greatest enemies: for whom can a person suspect, when he has lost his property, in so confined a space, but those who were acquainted with its being in his possession, and with the place in which it was deposited?—and who are these but his own messmates, or those in whom he most confided? After positive conviction, no punishment can be too severe for a crime that produces such mischief; but to degrade a man by corporal punishment, to ruin his character, and render him an object of abhorrence and contempt, in the absence of even bare presumptive evidence, was an act of cruelty and injustice, which could excite but one feeling: and, from that day, the man who would have gloried in dying for his country, became a discontented, gloomy, and dangerous subject.

The above effect would have been produced in any man: but to Peters, whose previous history we have yet to narrate, death itself would have been preferable. His heart did not break, but it swelled with contending passions, till it was burst and riven with wounds never to be cicatrised. Suffering

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under the most painful burthen that can oppress a man who values reputation, writhing with the injustice of accusation when innocent, of conviction without proof, and of punishment unmerited, it is not to be wondered at that Peters took the earliest opportunity of deserting from the ship.

There is a particular feeling pervading animal nature, from which man himself is not exempt. Indeed, with all his boasted reason, man still inherits too many of the propensities of the brute creation. I refer to that disposition which not only inclines us to feel satisfaction at finding we have companions in misfortune, but too often stimulates us to increase the number by our own exertions. From the stupendous elephant, down to the smallest of the feathered tribe, all will act as a decoy to their own species when in captivity themselves; and, in all compulsory service, which may be considered a species of captivity, man proves that he is imbued with the same propensity. Seamen that have been pressed themselves into the navy are invariably the most active in pressing others; and both soldiers and sailors have a secret pleasure in recapturing a deserter, even at the very time when they are watching an opportunity to desert themselves.

The bonds of friendship seem destroyed when this powerful and brutal feeling is called into action; and, as has frequently occurred in the service before and since, the man who was selected by Peters as his most intimate friend, the man with whom he had consulted, and to whom he had confided his plans for desertion, gave information of the retreat of his wife and child, from which place Peters was not likely to be very distant; and thus, with the assistance of this, his dearest friend, the master-at-arms and party in quest of him succeeded in his capture.

It so happened, that on the very day on which Peters was brought on board and put into irons, the purser's servant was discovered to have in his possession the watch that had been lost. Thus far the character of Peters was reinstated; and as he had declared, at the time of his capture, that the unjust punishment which he had received had been the motive of his desertion, the captain was strongly urged by the officers to overlook an offence which had everything to be offered in its extenuation. But Captain A—— was fond

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of courts-martial; he imagined that they added to his consequence, which certainly required to be upheld by adventitious aid. Moreover, the feeling, too often pervading little minds, that of a dislike taken to a person because you have injured him, and the preferring to accumulate injustice rather than to acknowledge error, had more than due weight with this weak man. A court-martial was held, and Peters was sentenced to death; but, in consideration of circumstances, the sentence was mitigated to that of being "flogged round the fleet."

Mitigated! Strange vanity in men, that they should imagine their own feelings to be more sensible and acute than those of others; that they should consider *that* a *mitigation* in favour of the prisoner, which, had they been placed in his situation, they would have declared an *accumulation* of the punishment. Not a captain who sat upon that court-martial but would have considered, as Peters did, that death was by far the more lenient sentence of the two. Yet they meant well—they felt kindly towards him, and acknowledged his provocations; but they fell into the too common error of supposing that the finer feelings, which induce a man to prefer death to dishonour, are only to be recognised among the higher classes; and that, because circumstances may have placed a man before the mast, he will undergo punishment, however severe, however degrading,—in short, every "ill that flesh is heir to,"—in preference to death.

As the reader may not, perhaps, be acquainted with the nature of the punishment to which Peters was sentenced, and the ceremonies by which it is attended, I shall enter into a short description of it.

A man sentenced to be flogged round the fleet receives an equal part of the whole number of lashes awarded, alongside each ship composing that fleet. For instance, if sentenced to three hundred lashes, in a fleet composed of ten sail, he will receive thirty alongside of each ship.

A launch is fitted up with a platform and shears. It is occupied by the unfortunate individual, the provost-marshal, the boatswain, and his mates, with their implements of office, and armed marines stationed at the bow and stern. When the signal is made for punishment, all the ships in the fleet send one or two boats each, with crews cleanly dressed, the



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officers in full uniform, and marines under arms. These boats collect at the side of the ship where the launch is lying, the hands are turned up, and the ship's company are ordered to mount the rigging, to witness that portion of the whole punishment which, after the sentence has been read, is inflicted upon the prisoner. When he has received the allotted number of lashes, he is, for the time, released, and permitted to sit down, with a blanket over his shoulders, while the boats, which attend the execution of the sentence, make fast to the launch, and tow it to the next ship in the fleet, where the same number of lashes are inflicted with corresponding ceremonies;—and thus he is towed from one ship to another until he has received the whole of his punishment.

The severity of this punishment consists not only in the number of lashes, but in the peculiar manner in which they are inflicted; as, after the unfortunate wretch has received the first part of his sentence alongside of one ship, the blood is allowed to congeal, and the wounds partially to close, during the interval which takes place previously to his arrival alongside of the next, when the cat again subjects him to renewed and increased torture. During the latter part of the punishment the suffering is dreadful; and a man who has undergone this sentence is generally broken down in constitution, if not in spirits, for the remainder of his life.

Such was the punishment inflicted upon the unfortunate Peters; and it would be difficult to decide, at the moment when it was completed, and the blanket thrown over his shoulders, whether the heart or the back of the fainting man were the more lacerated of the two.

Time can heal the wounds of the body, over which it holds its empire; but those of the soul, like the soul itself, spurn his transitory sway.

Peters from that moment was a desperate man. A short time after he had undergone his sentence, the news of the mutiny at Spithead was communicated; and the vacillation and apprehensions of the Admiralty, and of the nation at large, were not to be concealed. This mutiny was apparently quelled by conciliation; but conciliation is but a half measure, and ineffectual when offered from superiors to inferiors.

In this world, I know not why, there seems to be but one

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seal binding in all contracts of magnitude—and that seal is *blood*. Without referring to the Jewish types, proclaiming that “all things were purified by blood, and without shedding of blood there was no remission,”—without referring to that sublime mystery by which these types have been fulfilled,—it appears as if, in all ages and all countries, blood had been the only seal of security.

Examine the records of history, the revolution of opinion, the public tumults, the warfare for religious ascendancy—it will be found that, without this seal, these were only lulled for the moment, and invariably recommenced until *blood* had made its appearance as witness to “the act and deed.”

## CHAPTER II

This is a long description, but applies  
To scarce five minutes passed before the eyes;  
But yet *what* minutes! Moments like to these  
Rend men's lives into immortalities.

BYRON.

THE mutiny at Spithead was soon followed up by that at the Nore; and the ringleader, Parker, like a meteor darting through the firmament, sprung from nothing, coruscated, dazzled, and disappeared. The Texel fleet joined, except a few ships, which the courage and conduct of the gallant old Admiral Duncan preserved from the contagion. Let me here digress a little, to introduce to my readers the speech made by this officer to his ship's company on the first symptoms of disaffection. It is supposed that sailors are not eloquent. I assert that, with the exception of the North American Indians, who have to perfection the art of saying much in few words, there are few people more eloquent than sailors. The general object looked for in this world is to obtain the greatest possible effect with the smallest power; if so, the more simple the language, the more matter is condensed, the nearer we approach to perfection. Flourishes and flowers of rhetoric may be compared to extra wheels applied to a carriage, increasing the rattling and com-

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plexity of the machine, without adding to either the strength of its fabric or the rapidity of its course.

It was on the 6th of June that the fleet at the Nore was joined by the *Agamemnon*, *Leopard*, *Ardent*, and other ships which had separated from Admiral Duncan's fleet. When the Admiral found himself deserted by part of his own fleet, he called his own ship's crew together, and addressed them in the following speech :—

“ My lads ! I once more call you together with a sorrowful heart, owing to what I have lately seen, the disaffection of the fleets : I call it disaffection, for the crews have no grievances. To be deserted by my fleet, in the face of the enemy, is a disgrace which, I believe, never before happened to a British admiral ; nor could I have supposed it possible. My greatest comfort under God is, that I have been supported by the officers, seamen, and marines of this ship, for which, with a heart overflowing with gratitude, I request you to accept my sincere thanks. I flatter myself much good may result from your example, by bringing those deluded people to a sense of the duty which they owe, not only to their king and country, but to themselves.

“ The British navy has ever been the support of that liberty which has been handed down to us by our ancestors, and which I trust we shall maintain to the latest posterity—and that can only be done by unanimity and obedience. This ship's company, and others, who have distinguished themselves by loyalty and good order, deserve to be, and doubtless will be, the favourites of a grateful nation. They will also have, from their inward feelings, a comfort which will be lasting, and not like the floating and false confidence of those who have swerved from their duty.

“ It has often been my pride with you to look into the Texel, and see a foe which dreaded coming out to meet us. My pride is now humbled indeed ! our cup has overflowed, and made us wanton—the All-wise Providence has given us this check as a warning, and I hope we shall improve by it. On Him, then, let us trust, where our only security is to be found. I find there are many good men among us : for my own part, I have had full confidence in all in this ship ; and once more I beg to express my approbation of your conduct.

“ May God, who has thus far conducted you, continue to

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do so ; and may the British navy, the glory and support of our country, be restored to its wonted splendour, and be not only the bulwark of Britain, but the terror of the world.

“ But this can only be effected by a strict adherence to our duty and obedience ; and let us pray that the Almighty God may keep us in the right way of thinking.

“ God bless you all.”

At an address so unassuming, and so calculated, from its simplicity and truth, to touch the human heart, the whole ship's crew were melted into tears, and declared their resolution to adhere to their admiral in life or death. Had all the ships in the fleet been commanded by such men as Admiral Duncan, the mutiny at Spithead would not have been succeeded by that at the Nore : but the seamen had no confidence, either in their officers or in those who presided at the Board of Admiralty ; and distrust of their promises, which were considered to be given merely to gain time, was the occasion of the second and more alarming rebellion of the two.

The irritated mind of Peters was stimulated to join the disaffected parties. His pride, his superior education, and the acknowledgment among his shipmates that he was an injured man, all conspired to place him in the dangerous situation of ringleader on board of his own ship, the crew of which, although it had not actually joined in the mutiny, now showed open signs of discontent.

But the mine was soon exploded by the behaviour of the captain. Alarmed at the mutinous condition of the other ships which were anchored near to him and the symptoms of dissatisfaction in his own, he proceeded to an act of unjustifiable severity, evidently impelled by fear, and not by resolution. He ordered several of the petty officers and leading men of the ship to be thrown into irons, because they were seen to be earnestly talking together on the fore-castle, —and recollecting that his conduct towards Peters had been such as to warrant disaffection, he added him to the number. The effect of this injudicious step was immediate. The men came aft in a body on the quarter-deck, and requested to know the grounds upon which Peters and the other men had been placed in confinement ; and perceiving alarm in

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the countenance of the captain, notwithstanding the resolute bearing of the officers, they insisted upon the immediate release of their shipmates. Thus the first overt act of mutiny was brought on by the misconduct of the captain.

The officers expostulated and threatened in vain. Three cheers were called for by a voice in the crowd, and three cheers were immediately given. The marines, who still remained true to their allegiance, had been ordered under arms; the first lieutenant of the ship—for the captain, trembling and confused, stood a mere cipher—gave the order for the ship's company to go below, threatening to fire upon them if the order was not instantaneously obeyed. The captain of marines brought his men to the "make ready," and they were about to present, when the first lieutenant waved his hand to stop the decided measure, until he had first ascertained how far the mutiny was general. He stepped a few paces forward, and requested that every "blue jacket" who was inclined to remain faithful to his king and country would walk over from that side of the quarter-deck upon which the ship's company were assembled, to the one which was occupied by the officers and marines.

A pause and silence ensued—when, after some pushing and elbowing through the crowd, William Adams, an elderly quarter-master, made his appearance in the front, and passed over to the side where the officers stood, while the hisses of the rest of the ship's company expressed their disapprobation of his conduct. The old man just reached the other side of the deck, when turning round like a lion at bay, with one foot on the *coamings* of the hatchway, and his arm raised in the air to command attention, he addressed them in these few words:—

"My lads, I have fought for my king five-and-thirty years, and have been too long in his service to turn a rebel in my old age."

Would it be credited that, after the mutiny had been quelled, no representation of this conduct was made to Government by his captain? Yet such was the case, and such was the gratitude of Captain A——.

The example shown by Adams was not followed—the ship's crew again cheered, and ran down the hatchways, leaving the officers and marines on deck. They first disarmed the

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sentry under the half-deck, and released the prisoners, and then went forward to consult upon further operations.

They were not long in deciding. A boatswain's mate, who was one of the ringleaders, piped, "Stand by hammocks!" The men ran on deck, each seizing a hammock, and jumping with it down below on the main-deck. The object of this manœuvre not being comprehended, they were suffered to execute it without interruption. In a few minutes they sent up the marine whom they had disarmed when sentry over the prisoners, to state that they wished to speak to the captain and officers, who, after some discussion, agreed that they would descend and hear the proposals which the ship's company should make. Indeed, even with the aid of the marines, many of whom were wavering, resistance would now have been useless, and could only have cost them their lives; for they were surrounded by other ships who had hoisted the flag of insubordination, and whose guns were trained ready to pour in a destructive fire on the least sign of an attempt to purchase their anchor. To the main-deck they consequently repaired.

The scene which here presented itself was as striking as it was novel. The after-part of the main-deck was occupied by the captain and officers, who had come down with the few marines who still continued steadfast to their duty, and one sailor only, Adams, who had so nobly stated his determination on the quarter-deck. The foremost part of the deck was tenanted by a noisy and tumultuous throng of seamen, whose heads only appeared above a barricade of hammocks, which they had formed across the deck, and out of which at two embrasures, admirably constructed, two long twenty-four pounders, loaded up to the muzzle with grape and canister shot, were pointed aft in the direction where the officers and marines were standing—a man at the breech of each gun, with a match in his hand (which he occasionally blew, that the priming powder might be more rapidly ignited), stood ready for the signal to fire.

The captain, aghast at the sight, would have retreated, but the officers, formed of sterner materials, persuaded him to stay, although he showed such evident signs of fear and perturbation as seriously to injure a cause in which resolution and presence of mind alone could avail. The mutineers, at



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the suggestion of Peters, had already sent aft their preliminary proposals, which were, that the officers and marines should surrender up their arms, and consider themselves under an arrest, intimating at the same time that the first step in advance made by any one of their party would be the signal for applying the match to the touch-holes of the guns.

There was a pause and dead silence, as if it were a calm, although every passion was roused and on the alert; every bosom heaved tumultuously, and every pulse was trebled in its action. The same feeling which so powerfully affects the truant schoolboy—who, aware of his offence, and dreading the punishment in perspective, can scarce enjoy the rapture of momentary emancipation—acted upon the mutineers, in an increased ratio, proportioned to the magnitude of their stake. Some hearts beat with remembrance of injuries and hopes of vengeance and retaliation; others with ambition, long dormant, bursting from its concealed recess; and many were actuated by that restlessness which induced them to consider any change to be preferable to the monotony of existence in compulsory servitude.

Among the officers, some were oppressed with anxious forebodings of evil—those peculiar sensations which, when death approaches nearly to the outward senses, alarm the heart; others experienced no feeling but that of manly fortitude and determination to die, if necessary, like men; in others, alas!—in which party, small as it was, the captain was pre-eminent—fear and trepidation amounted almost to the loss of reason.

Such was the state of the main-deck of the ship at the moment in which we are now describing it to the reader.

And yet, in the very centre of all this tumult, there was one who, although not indifferent to the scene around him, felt interested without being anxious, astonished without being alarmed. Between the contending and divided parties, stood a little boy, about six years old. He was the perfection of childish beauty; chestnut hair waved in curls on his forehead, health glowed on his rosy cheeks, dimples sported over his face, as he altered the expression of his countenance, and his large dark eyes flashed with intelligence and animation. He was dressed in mimic imitation of a man-of-war's man—loose trousers, tightened at the hips, to preclude the

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necessity of suspenders—and a white duck frock, with long sleeves and blue collar—while a knife, attached to a lanyard, was suspended round his neck: a light and narrow-brimmed straw hat on his head completed his attire. At times he looked aft at the officers and marines; at others he turned his eyes forward to the hammocks, behind which the ship's company were assembled. The sight was new to him, but he was already accustomed to reflect much, and to ask few questions. Go to the officers he did not, for the presence of the captain restrained him. Go to the ship's company he could not, for the barricade of hammocks prevented him. There he stood, in wonderment, but not in fear.

There was something beautiful and affecting in the situation of the boy; calm, when all around him was anxious tumult; thoughtless, when the brains of others were oppressed with the accumulation of ideas; contented, where all was discontent; peaceful, where each party that he stood between was thirsting for each other's blood:—there he stood, the only happy, the only innocent one, amongst hundreds swayed by jarring interests and contending passions.

And yet he was in keeping, although in such strong contrast, with the rest of the picture; for where is the instance of the human mind being so thoroughly depraved as not to have one good feeling left? Nothing exists so base and vile as not to have one redeeming quality. There is no poison without some antidote—no precipice, however barren, without some trace of verdure—no desert, however vast, without some spring to refresh the parched traveller, some oasis, some green spot, which, from its situation, in comparison with surrounding objects, appears almost heavenly; and thus did the boy look almost angelic, standing as he did between the angry exasperated parties on the main-deck of the disorganised ship.

After some little time he walked forward, and leaned against one of the twenty-four pounders that was pointed out of the embrasure, the muzzle of which was on a level with, and intercepted by, his little head.

Adams, the quarter-master, observing the dangerous situation of the child, stepped forward. This was against the stipulations laid down by the mutineers, and Peters cried out to him—"Heave-to, Adams, or we fire!" Adams waved

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his hand in expostulation, and continued to advance. "Keep back," again cried Peters, "or, by ——, we fire!"

"Not upon one old man, Peters, and he unarmed," replied Adams; "I'm not worth so much powder and shot." The man at the gun blew his match. "For God's sake, for your own sake, as you value your happiness and peace of mind, do not fire, Peters!" cried Adams, with energy, "or you'll never forgive yourself."

"Hold fast the match," said Peters; "we need not fear one man;" and as he said this, Adams had come up to the muzzle of the gun and seized the boy, whom he snatched up in his arms.

"I only came forward, Peters, to save your own boy, whose head would have been blown to atoms if you had chanced to have fired the gun," said Adams, turning short round, and walking aft with the boy in his arms.

"God in heaven bless you, Adams!" cried Peters, with a faltering voice, and casting a look of fond affection at the child. The heart of the mutineer was at that moment softened by parental feelings, and he blew the priming off the touch-hole of the gun, lest an accidental spark should risk the life of his child, who was now aft with the officers and their party.

Reader, this little boy will be the hero of our tale.

## CHAPTER III

Roused discipline alone proclaims their cause,  
And injured navies urge their broken laws.  
Pursue we in his track the mutineer.

BYRON.

MAN, like all other animals of a gregarious nature, is more inclined to follow than to lead. There are few who are endued with that impetus of soul which prompts them to stand foremost as leaders in the storming of the breach, whether it be of a fortress of stone or the more dangerous one of public opinion, when failure in the one case may

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precipitate them on the sword, and in the other consign them to the scaffold.

In this mutiny there were but few of the rare class referred to above: in the ship whose movements we have been describing not one, perhaps, except Peters. There were many boisterous, many threatening, but no one, except him, who was equal to the command, or to whom the command could have been confided. He was, on board of his own ship, the very life and soul of the mutiny. At the moment described at the end of the last chapter, all the better feelings of his still virtuous heart were in action; and, by a captain possessing resolution and a knowledge of human nature, the mutiny might have been suppressed; but Captain A——, who perceived the anxiety of Peters, thought the child a prize of no small value, and as Adams brought him aft, snatched the boy from his arms, and desired two of the party of marines to turn their loaded muskets at his young heart—thus intimating to the mutineers that he would shoot the child at the first sign of hostility on their part.

The two marines who had received this order looked at each other in silence, and did not obey. It was repeated by the captain, who considered that he had hit upon a masterpiece of diplomacy. The officers expostulated; the officer commanding the party of marines turned away in disgust; but in vain: the brutal order was reiterated with threats. The whole party of marines now murmured, and consulted together in a low tone.

Willy Peters was the idol and plaything of the whole crew. He had always been accustomed to remain on board with his father, and there was not a man in the ship who would not have risked his life to have saved that of the child. The effect of this impolitic and cruel order was decisive. The marines, with the sergeant at their head, and little Willy placed in security in the centre, their bayonets directed on the defensive, towards the captain and officers, retreated to the mutineers, whom they joined with three cheers, as the child was lifted over the barricade of hammocks, and received into his father's arms.

"We must now submit to their terms, sir," said the first lieutenant.

"Any terms, any terms," answered the terrified captain:

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"tell them so, for God's sake, or they will fire. Adams, go forward and tell them we submit."

This order was, however, unnecessary; for the mutineers, aware of the impossibility of any further resistance, had thrown down the barricade of hammocks, and, with Peters at their head, were coming aft.

"You consent, gentlemen, to consider yourselves under an arrest?" inquired Peters of the first lieutenant and officers, without paying any attention to the captain.

"We do, we do," cried Captain A——. "I hope you will not stain your hands with blood. Mr. Peters, I meant the child no harm."

"If you had murdered him, Captain A——, you could not have injured him so much as you have injured his father," retorted Peters; "but fear not for your life, sir: that is safe; and you will meet all the respect and attention to your wants that circumstances will permit. We war not with individuals."

It was a proud moment for Peters to see this man cringing before him, and receiving with thanks the promise of his life from one whom he had so cruelly treated. There was a glorious revenge in it, the full force of which could only be felt by the granting, not the receiving party: for it could only be appreciated by one who possessed those fine and honourable feelings, of which Captain A—— was wholly destitute.

If the reader will consult the various records of the times which we are now describing, he will find that every respect was personally paid to the officers, although they were deprived of their arms. Some of the most obnoxious were sent on shore, and the intemperate conduct of others produced effects for which they had only to thank themselves; but, on the whole, the remark made by Peters was strictly correct: "They warred not with individuals,"—they demanded justice from an ungrateful country.

It is true that the demands in this mutiny were not so reasonable as in the preceding; but where is the *man* who can confine himself to the exact balance of justice when his own feelings are unwittingly thrown into the scale?

As I before stated, it is not my intention to follow up the details of this national disgrace, but merely to confine myself

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to that part which is connected with the present history. Peters, as delegate from his ship, met the others, who were daily assembled, by Parker's directions, on board of the *Queen Charlotte*, and took a leading and decided part in the arrangements of the disaffected fleet.

But Parker, the ringleader, although a man of talent, was not equal to the task he had undertaken. He lost sight of several important features necessary to ensure success in all civil commotions: such as rapidity and decision of action, constant employment being found, and continual excitement being kept up amongst his followers, to afford no time for reflection. Those who serve under an established government know exactly their present weight in the scale of worldly rank, and the extent of their future expectations; they have accustomed themselves to bound their ambition accordingly; and feeling conscious that passive obedience is the surest road to advancement, are led quietly, here or there, to be slaughtered at the will and caprice of their superiors. But the leader of the disaffected against an established government has a difficult task. He has nothing to offer to his followers but promises. There is nothing on hand—all is expectation. If allowed time for reflection, they soon perceive that they are acting an humble part in a dangerous game; and that even though it be attended with success, in all probability they will receive no share of the advantages, although certain of incurring a large proportion of the risk. The leader of a connected force of the above description rises to a dangerous height when borne up by the excitement of the time; but let it once be permitted to subside, and, like the aeronaut in his balloon, from which the gas escapes while it is soaring in the clouds, he is precipitated from his lofty station, and gravitates to his own destruction.

He must be a wonderful man who can collect all the resources of a popular commotion, and bring it to a successful issue. The reason is obvious—everything depends upon the leader alone. His followers are but as the stones composing the arch of the bridge by which the gulf is to be crossed between them and their nominal superiors; he is the keystone, upon which the whole depends—if completely fitted, rendering the arch durable and capable of bearing any pressure; but if too small in dimensions or imperfect in conformation,



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rendering the whole labour futile, and occasioning all the fabric previously raised to be precipitated by its own weight, and dispersed in ruin and confusion.

This latter was the fate of the mutiny at the Nore. The insurrection was quelled, and the ringleaders were doomed to undergo the utmost penalty of martial law. Among the rest, Peters was sentenced to death.

In the foremost part of the main-deck of a line-of-battle ship, in a square room, strongly bulkheaded, and receiving light from one of the ports, as firmly secured with an iron grating—with no other furniture than a long wooden form—his legs in shackles, that ran upon a heavy iron bar lying on the deck—sat the unfortunate prisoner, in company with three other individuals—his wife, his child, and old Adams, the quarter-master. Peters was seated on the deck, supporting himself by leaning against the bulkhead. His wife was lying beside him, with her face hidden in his lap. Adams occupied the form, and the child stood between his knees. All were silent, and the eyes of the three were directed towards one of the sad company, who appeared more wretched and disconsolate than the rest.

“My dear, dear Ellen!” said Peters mournfully, as a fresh burst of grief convulsed her attenuated frame.

“Why, then, refuse my solicitations, Edward? If not for yourself, listen to me for the sake of your wife and child. Irritated as your father still may be, his dormant affection will be awakened when he is acquainted with the dreadful situation of his only son; nay, his family pride will never permit that you should perish by so ignominious a death; and your assumed name will enable him, without blushing, to exert his interest and obtain your reprieve.”

“Do not put me to the pain of again refusing you, my dearest Ellen. I desire to die, and my fate must be a warning to others. When I reflect what dreadful consequences might have ensued to the country from our rebellious proceedings, I am thankful, truly thankful to God that we did not succeed. I know what you would urge—my wrongs, my undeserved stripes; I, too, would urge them; and when my conscience has pressed me hard, have urged them in palliation; but I feel that it is only in palliation, not in justification, that they can be brought forward. They are no more in comparison

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with my crime than the happiness of one individual is to that of the nation which I assisted to endanger, because one constituting a part of it had, unauthorised, oppressed me. No, no, Ellen, I should not be happy if I were not to atone for my faults; and this wretched life is the only atonement I can offer. But for you, and that poor child, my dearest and kindest, I should go to the scaffold rejoicing: but the thoughts—O God, strengthen and support me!" cried the unhappy man, hiding his face in his hands.

"Fear not for me, Edward. I feel here," said Ellen, laying her hand on her heart, "a conviction that we shall soon meet again. I will urge you no more, love. But the boy—the boy—O Edward! what will become of that dear boy when we are both gone?"

"Please God to spare my life, he'll never want a father," said old Adams, as the tears found a devious passage down the furrows of his weather-beaten face.

"What will become of him?" cried Peters with energy. "Why, he shall retrieve his father's faults—wash out the stain in his father's character. He shall prove as liege a subject as I have been a rebellious one. He shall as faithfully serve his country as I have shamefully deserted it. He shall be as honest as I have been false; and oh, may he be as prosperous as I have been unfortunate—as happy as I have been miserable. Come hither, boy. By the fond hopes I entertain of pardon and peace above—by the Almighty, in whose presence I must shortly tremble, I here devote thee to thy country—serve her bravely and faithfully. Tell me, Willy, do you understand me, and will you promise me this?"

The boy laid his head upon his father's shoulder, and answered in a low tone—"I will;" and then, after a short pause, added, "But what are they going to do with you, father?"

"I am going to die for my country's good, my child. If God wills it, may you do the same, but in a more honourable manner."

The boy seemed lost in thought, and, after a short time, quitted his father's side, and sat down on the deck by his mother, without speaking.

Adams rose, and taking him up, said, "Mayhap you have that to talk of which wants no listeners. I will take Willy

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with me, and give him a little air before I put him in his hammock. It's but a close hole, this. Good night to you both, though I'm afeard that's but a wish."

But a wish indeed!—and it was the last that was ever to close upon the unhappy Peters. The next morning was appointed for his execution. There are scenes of such consummate misery, that they cannot be portrayed without harrowing up the feelings of the reader, and of these the climax may be found in a fond wife, lying at the feet of her husband during the last twelve hours of his mortal career. We must draw the curtain.

And now, reader, the title of this work, which may have puzzled you, will be explained: for, intelligible as it may be to our profession, it may be a mystery to those who are not in his Majesty's service. The broad-headed arrow was a mark assumed at the time of the Edwards (when it was considered the most powerful weapon of attack), as distinguishing the property of the King, and this mark has been continued down to the present day. Every article supplied to his Majesty's service from the arsenals and dockyards is thickly studded with this mark, and to be found in possession of any property so marked is a capital offence, as it designates that property to be the *King's own*.

When Adams left the condemned cell with Willy, he thought upon what had passed, and as Peters had devoted the boy to his king and country, he felt an irresistible desire to mark him. The practice of tattooing is very common in the navy; and you will see a sailor's arm covered with emblems from the shoulder to the wrist—his own initials, that of his sweetheart, the crucifix, Neptune, and mermaids being huddled together, as if mythology and Scripture were one and the same thing. Adams was not long in deciding, and telling our little hero that his father wished it, he easily persuaded him to undergo the pain of the operation, which was performed on the forecastle, by pricking the shape of the figure required with the points of needles, and rubbing the bleeding parts with wet gunpowder and ink. By these simple means the form of a broad-headed arrow, or the King's mark, was, in the course of an hour, indelibly engraved upon the left shoulder of little Willy, who was then consigned to his hammock.

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### CHAPTER IV

The strife was o'er, the vanquished had their doom ;  
The mutineers were crushed, dispersed, or ta'en,  
Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain.

BYRON.

THE day broke serenely but brightly, and poured in a stream of light through the iron grating of the cell where Peters and his wife lay clasped in each other's arms, not asleep, but torpid, and worn out with extreme suffering. Peters was the first to break the silence, and gently moved Ellen as he called her by her name. She had not for some time lifted up her head, which was buried in his bosom, and she was not aware that the darkness had been dispelled. She raised her head at his summons, and as the dazzling light burst upon her sunken eyes, so did the recollection that this was the fatal morning flash upon her memory.

With a shriek, she again buried her face in the bosom of her husband. "Ellen, as you love me," said Peters, "do not distress me in my last hour. I have yet much to do before I die, and require your assistance and support. Rise, my love, and let me write to my father; I must not neglect the interest of our child."

She rose tremblingly, and, turning back from her face her beautiful hair, which had been for so many days neglected, and was now moistened with her tears, reached the materials required by her husband, who, drawing towards him the wooden form to serve him as a table, wrote the following letter, while his wife sat by him with a countenance of idiotic apathy and despair:—

"DEAR FATHER,—Yes, still *dear* father,—Before you cast your eyes upon these characters, you will be childless. Your eldest boy perished nobly in the field of honour: your youngest and last will this morning meet an ignominious but deserved death on the scaffold. Thus will you be childless; but if your son does meet the fate of a traitor, still the secret is confined to you alone, and none will imagine

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that the unhappy Peters, ringleader of a mutinous ship, was the scion of a race who have so long preserved an unblemished name. Fain would I have spared you this shock to your feelings, and have allowed you to remain in ignorance of my disgrace ; but I have an act of duty to perform to you and to my child—towards you, that your estates may not be claimed and pass away to distant and collateral branches ;—towards my child, that he may eventually reclaim his rights. Father, I forgive you, I might say—But no ; let all now be buried in oblivion ; and as you peruse these lines, and think on my unhappy fate, shed a tear in memory of the once happy child you fondled on your knee, and say to your heart, ‘I forgive him.’

“I have dedicated my boy to his king and country. If you forgive me, and mean to protect your grandchild, do not change the career in life marked out for him :—it is a solemn compact between my God and me ; and you must fulfil this last earnest request of a dying man, as you hope for future pardon and bliss.

“His distracted mother sits by me ; I would entreat you to extend your kindness towards her, but I fear she will soon require no earthly aid. Still, soothe her last moments with a promise to protect the orphan, and may God bless you for your kindness.—Your affectionate son,  
EDWARD.”

Peters had scarcely finished this letter when Adams, with the boy in his arms, was admitted. “I come for final orders, Peters, and to tell you what I did last night to this boy. He is real stuff,—never winced. You said he was to be the king’s, and I thought you would like that he should be marked as such. There is no mistaking this mark, Peters,” continued Adams, baring the boy’s shoulder, and showing the impression of the broad-headed arrow, which now appeared angry and inflamed, as it always is for some days after the operation. “I did not mention that I was going to do it, because Ellen then might not have liked it : but I hope you do.”

“Many, many thanks,” answered Peters ; and opening his letter, which was folded, but not sealed, he added a postscript, pointing out the mark by which the boy would be identified. “You could not have done me a greater favour, Adams ; and

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now you must promise me one more, which is to look after my poor Ellen when——”

“I understand, my good fellow, and I will,” replied Adams. “There is the chaplain outside, who is all ready for service if you would like to see him,” continued the old man, passing his hands over his humid eyes.

“Ask him to come in, Adams; he is a good man, and an honour to his profession. I shall be glad to see him.”

Adams went to the door, and soon returned with the chaplain. He saluted Peters, who respectfully bowed to him, and said: “I have long made my peace with God and man, sir, and am as well prepared to die as sinful mortal can be, in faith and charity with all men. Many thanks to you, sir, for your kindness; but, sir, you may be of use here yet. Can you”—and his voice faltered.—“can you, sir, help that poor young woman? Cannot you reason her into some kind of tranquillity, some degree of submission to God’s will? Oh, do that, sir, and you will confer a favour on me indeed.”

The chaplain approached Ellen, who lay on the deck in a state of mental stupefaction, and, addressing her in mild accents, persuaded her to rise and take a seat on the form: he kindly contrived to bring it forward to the iron-grated port, so that she could not witness the motions of Peters, and, with a low, yet energetic and persuasive voice, attempted to reason her into patience and resignation. His efforts were in vain. She occasionally looked upon him with a vacant stare, but her thoughts were elsewhere. During the period, Peters had time to shave himself and dress in clean attire, preparatory to being summoned to his fate.

The time was approaching fast; one bell after eight o’clock, designating the half hour, had struck; at two bells (nine o’clock) he was to be summoned to his doom. The clergyman rose from his useless endeavours. “Let us pray,” said he, and sank upon his knees. Peters, Adams, and the child followed his example; and, last of all, poor Ellen, who seemed to recover her recollection, sank on her knees, but, unable to keep her position, fell towards the clergyman, who, as he supported her in his arms, poured forth a fervent and eloquent appeal in behalf of the one who was about to appear in the presence of his Maker, and of those who were left



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in tribulation behind. It was scarcely over when the door opened, and the provost-marshal claimed his prisoner.

The prayer of the chaplain seemed to ring in Ellen's ears, and she remained supported by the worthy man, muttering parts of it at intervals, during which time the limbs of her husband were freed from the shackles. All was ready; and Peters, straining the child to his bosom in silence, and casting one look at his dear Ellen, who still remained in a state of stupefaction, denied himself a last embrace (though the effort wrung his heart), rather than awaken her to her misery. He quitted the cell, and the chaplain, quietly placing Ellen in the arms of Adams, followed, that he might attend and support Peters in his last moments.

The prisoner was conducted on the quarter-deck previously to being sent forward to execution. His sentence was read by Captain A——; and the remark may perhaps be considered uncharitable, but there certainly appeared to be an ill-concealed satisfaction in his countenance as he came to that part where it stated that the prisoner was to "suffer death." Peters heard it read with firmness, and asked permission to address the ship's company. This was at first refused by the captain; but, at the request of the officers, and the assurance of the chaplain that he would vouch for the language of Peters being such as would have a proper tendency to future subordination on the part of the ship's company, it was assented to. Bowing first to the captain and officers, Peters turned to the ship's company, who were assembled on the booms and gangway, and addressed them as follows:—

"Shipmates, the time may come when our country shall be at peace, and your services no longer be required. Then, when you narrate to your children the events of this unhappy mutiny, do not forget to add instruction to amusement by pointing out to them that it ended in the disgrace and death of the ringleaders. Tell them that, in your presence, one of them acknowledged on the quarter-deck the justice of his sentence, and returned thanks to his Majesty for his kindness in pardoning others who had been led into the same error. Tell them to do their duty, to fight nobly for their king and country, and warn them by our example——"

At this moment Willy, who had eluded the vigilance of old

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Adams, who was occupied in supporting the inanimate Ellen, pushed his way between the legs of the marines, who were drawn up in ranks on the quarter-deck, and, running to his father, laid hold of the loose sailor's trousers in which he was attired, and looked anxiously and inquisitively in his face. Peters' voice faltered; he attempted to continue his address to the men, but could not; and waving his hand, and pointing to the child, in mute explanation of the cause, after struggling in vain against the overflowings of a father's heart, he bent over the boy and burst into tears.

The effect was electrical. The shock was communicated to all; not an eye but was dimmed; sobs were heard in the crowd; the oldest officers turned away to conceal their emotions; the younger, and more fresh in heart, covered their faces and leant against the bulwarks; the marines forgot their discipline, and raised their hands from their sides to wipe their eyes. Many a source, long supposed to be hermetically sealed, was reopened,—many a spring long dry reflowed rapidly; even Captain A—— was moved.

By a singular coincidence, the grouping of the parties at this moment was nearly the same as when we first introduced our little hero to the reader,—the officers and marines on the after part of the deck, the ship's company forward, and little Willy standing between the two. Again he appears in the same position;—but what a change of feeling had taken place! As if he had been a little spirit of good, waving his fairy talisman, evil passions, which in the former scene were let loose, had retired to their darkest recesses, and all the better feelings of humanity were called forth and displayed in one universal, spontaneous, and unfeigned tribute to the melancholy and affecting scene.

The silence was first broken by Willy—"Where are you going, father; and why do you wear that nightcap?"

"I am going to sleep, child,—to an eternal sleep! God bless and protect you," said Peters, taking him up and kissing him. "And now, sir, I am ready," continued Peters, who had recovered his self-possession. "Captain A——, I forgive you, as I trust to be forgiven myself. Mr. ——," said he, addressing the first-lieutenant, "take this child by the hand, and do not permit him to come forward—remember he is the 'King's Own.'" Then, bowing to the chaplain,

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who had scarcely recovered from the effects that the scene had produced upon him, and looking significantly at the provost-marshal, Peters bent his steps forward by the gangway—the noose was fastened—the gun fired, and in a moment all was over.

Loud as was the report of the gun, those who were appointed to the unpleasant duty of running aft with the rope on the main-deck, which swung Peters to the yard-arm, heard a shriek that even that deafening noise could not overpower. It was the soul of Ellen joining that of her husband—and, before the day closed, their bodies were consigned to the same grave—

“Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.”

## CHAPTER V

Lord of himself, that heritage of woe.

BYRON.

OUR novel may, to a certain degree, be compared to one of the pantomimes which rival theatres annually bring forth for the amusement of the holiday children. We open with dark and solemn scenes, introducing occasionally a bright image, which appears with the greater lustre from the contrast around it; and thus we proceed, until Harlequin is fairly provided with his wand, and despatched to seek his adventures by land and by sea. To complete the parallel, the whole should wind up with a blaze of light and beauty, till our dazzled eyes are relieved, and the illusion disappears, at the fall of the green curtain, which, like the “FINIS” at the end of the third volume, tells us that all is over.

We must, however, be allowed to recapitulate a little in this chapter, previously to launching our hero upon the uncertain and boisterous sea of human life. It will be necessary, for the correct development of the piece, that the attention of the reader should be called to the history of the grandfather of our hero.

Admiral De Courcy was the lineal descendant of an ancient

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and wealthy family, of high aristocratic connection. He had the misfortune, at an early age, to lose his father, to be an only child, and to have a very weak and doting mother. Add to all these, that he was the heir to a large entailed property, and the reader will acknowledge that even the best-disposed child stood a fair chance of being spoiled.

But young De Courcy was not a well-disposed child; he was of a violent, headstrong, and selfish disposition, and was not easily to be checked by the firmest hand. He advanced to man's estate, the cruel tyrant of a fond and foolish mother and the dislike of all around him. His restless disposition, backed by the persuasions of his mother to the contrary, induced him to enter into the naval service. At the time we are now describing, the name of a boy often appeared on the books of a man-of-war when the boy himself was at school or at home with his friends; if there were any regulations to the contrary, they were easily surmounted by interest. The consequence was that,—without any knowledge of his profession, without having commenced his career by learning to obey before he was permitted to command,—at the early age of eighteen years, young De Courcy was appointed captain of a fine frigate; and, as the power of a captain of a man-of-war was at that time almost without limit, and his conduct without scrutiny, he had but too favourable an opportunity of indulging his tyrannical propensities. His caprice and violence were unbounded, his cruelty odious, and his ship was designated by the sobriquet of *The Hell Afloat*.

There are, however, limits to the longest tether; and as no officer would remain in the ship, and the desertion of the men became so extensive that a fine frigate lay useless and unmanned, the Government at last perceived the absolute necessity of depriving of command one who could not command himself. The ship was paid off, and even the interest of Captain De Courcy, powerful as it was, could not obtain further employment for him. Having for some time been in possession of his large property, Captain De Courcy retired to the hall of his ancestors, with feelings of anger against the Government, which his vindictive temper prompted him to indulge by the annoyance of all around him; and, instead of diffusing joy and comfort by the expenditure of his wealth,

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he rendered himself odious by avarice,—a vice the more contemptible as it was unexpected at so early an age.

But, much as he was an object of abhorrence, he was more an object of pity. With a handsome exterior, and with fascinating manners, of high birth and connections, with a splendid fortune,—in short, with every supposed advantage that the world could give,—he was, through the injudicious conduct of a fond mother, whose heart he had broken, the most miserable of beings. He was without society, for he was shunned by the resident gentlemen in the neighbourhood. Even match-making mothers, with hearts indurated by interest, and with a string of tall daughters to provide for, thought the sacrifice too great, and shuddered at an alliance with Captain De Courcy. Avoided by the tenants of his large estates, whose misfortunes met with no compassion, and whose inability to answer the demands of the rent-day were followed up with immediate distress and seizure,—abhorred by his own household, who, if their services were not required, vanished at his approach, or, if summoned, entered the door of his room trembling,—he was an isolated and unhappy being, a torment to himself and to others. Wise, indeed, was Solomon when he wrote, that “he who spared the rod spoiled the child.”

The monotony of a life whose sole negative enjoyment consisted in the persecution of others, induced Captain De Courcy to make occasional excursions to the different watering-places; and whether that, to a certain degree, he was schooled by banishment from society at home, or that he had no opportunity of displaying his diabolical temper, his prepossessing appearance and well-known riches made him a great favourite in these marts for beauty. An amiable girl was unfortunate enough to fix his attention, and a hasty proposal was as hastily accepted by her friends, and quietly acquiesced in by herself. She married, and was miserable until released from her heedless engagement by death.

There are those who excuse a violent temper in a man, and consider it no obstacle to happiness in the marriage life. Alas! may they never discover the fatal error in their own union! Even with the best-hearted and most fondly attached, with those who will lavish every endearment, acknowledge their fault, and make every subsequent effort to compensate

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for the irritation of the moment, violence of temper must prove the bane of marriage bliss. Bitter and insulting expressions have escaped, unheeded at the time, and forgotten by the offending party; but, although forgiven, never to be forgotten by the other. Like barbed arrows, they have entered into the heart of her whom he had promised before God to love and to cherish, and remain there they must, for they cannot be extracted. Affection may pour balm into the wounds and soothe them for a time, and, while love fans them with his soft wings, the heat and pain may be unperceived; but passion again asserts his empire, and upon his rude attack these ministering angels are forced from their office of charity, and woman—kind, devoted woman—looks inwardly with despair upon her wounded and festering heart.

Hurried as she was to an early tomb, the unfortunate wife of Captain De Courcy had still time to present him with two fine boys, whose infantine endearments soothed his violence; and, as long as they showed no spirit of resistance, they were alternately fondled and frightened. But children are not blind, and the scenes which continually occurred between their parents,—the tears of their mother, and the remarks made in their presence by the domestics,—soon taught them to view their father with dread. Captain De Courcy perceived that he was shunned by his children, the only beings whom he had endeavoured (as far as his temper would permit) to attach to him. They were dismissed to school at a very early age, and were soon treated by their father in the same harsh manner as all those who had the misfortune to be under his baneful protection. They returned home at holiday time with regret, and the recommencement of their scholastic duties was a source of delight. The mother died, and all at home was desolate. The violence of their father seemed to increase from indulgence; and the youths, who were verging into manhood, proved that no small portion of the parent's fiery disposition had been transmitted to them, and showed a spirit of resistance which ended in their ruin.

William, the eldest of the boys, was, as it were, by birth-right, the first to fall a victim to his father's temper. Struck senseless and bleeding to the ground for some trifling indiscretion, as he lay confined to his bed for many subsequent



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days, he formed the resolution of seeking his own fortune rather than submit to hourly degradation. At the period at which this occurred, many years previously to the one of which we are now writing, the East India Company had but a short time received its charter, and its directors were not the proud rulers which they have since become. It never was calculated that a company, originally consisting of a few enterprising merchants, could ever have established themselves (even by the most successful of mischievous arts) the controllers of an immense empire, independent of, and anomalous to, the constitution of England; or that privileges, granted to stimulate the enterprise of individuals, would have been the ground of a monopoly, which, like an enormous incubus, should oppress the nation from the throne to the cottage. They gladly accepted the offers of all adventurers; and at that period there was as much eagerness on their part to secure the services of individuals, as there is now on the part of applicants to be enrolled on the books of the Company.

William, without acquainting his father, entered into an engagement with the Company, signed it, and was shipped off, with many others, who, less fortunate, had been nefariously kidnapped for the same destination. He arrived in India, rose to the rank of captain, and fell in one of the actions that were fought at this time. The letter which William left on the table, directed to his father, informing him of the step he had been induced to take, was torn to atoms and stamped upon with rage; and the bitter malediction of the parent was launched with dreadful vehemence upon the truant son, in the presence of the one who remained.

And yet there was one man before whom this haughty and vindictive spirit quailed, and who had the power to soften, although not wholly to curb, his impetuosity,—one who dared to tell him the truth, expose to him the folly and wickedness of his conduct, and meet the angry flash of his eye with composure,—one whose character and office secured him from insult, and who was neither to be frightened nor diverted from his purpose of doing good. It was the vicar of the parish, who, much as he disliked the admiral (for Captain De Courcy had latterly obtained the rank by seniority on the list), continued his visits to the hall, that he might appeal for

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the unfortunate. The admiral would willingly have shaken him off, but his attempts were in vain. The vicar was firm at his post, and often successfully pleaded the cause of his parishioners, who were most of them tenants of the admiral. He was unassisted in his parochial duties by the curate, a worthy, but infirm and elderly man, fast sinking into his grave, and whom, out of Christian charity, he would not remove from his situation, as it would have deprived him of the means of support.

Edward, the younger brother, naturally sought that happiness abroad which was denied him at home. The house of the curate was one of his most favourite resorts, for the old man had a beautiful and only daughter,—poor Ellen, whose fate we have just recorded. It is sufficient for the present narrative to state that these two young people loved and plighted their troth; that for two years they met with joy and parted with regret, until the approaching dissolution of the old curate opened their eyes to the dangerous position in which they were placed. He died, and Edward, who beheld her whom he loved thrown unprotected and penniless on the world, mustered up the courage of desperation to state to his father the wishes of his heart.

A peremptory order to leave the house or abandon Ellen was the immediate result; and the indignant young man quitted the roof, and persuaded the unhappy and fond girl to unite herself to him by indissoluble ties in a neighbouring parish, before the vicar had possession of the facts or the opportunity to dissuade him from so imprudent a step. He immediately proceeded to the hall, with a faint hope of appeasing the irritated parent; but his endeavours were fruitless, and the admiral poured forth his anathema against his only child.

Edward now took his wife to a village some miles distant, where by their mutual exertions they contrived for some time to live upon their earnings; but the birth of their first child, the hero of this tale, and the expenses attending her sickness, forced him at last (when all appeals to his father proved in vain) to accept the high bounty that was offered for men to enter into his Majesty's service, which he did under the assumed name of Edward Peters.

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### CHAPTER VI

—I disclaim all my paternal care,  
Propinquity and property of blood.  
The barbarous Scythian,  
Or he that makes his generation messes  
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom  
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,  
As him. SHAKESPEARE.

IN a lofty room, the wainscoting of which was of dark oak, with a high mantelpiece, elaborately carved in the same wood with groups of dead game and flowers, and a few choice pictures let into the panels,—upon an easy-chair that once had been splendid with morocco and gold, sat a man of about fifty years of age; but his hair was grey and his face was indented with deep lines and furrows. He was listening with impatience to the expostulations of one who stood before him, and shifted his position from time to time, when more than usually annoyed with the subject. It was Admiral De Courcy and the vicar of the parish, who was persuading him to be merciful.

The subject of this discourse was, however, dismissed by the entrance of a servant, who presented to the admiral, upon a large and massive salver, a letter brought, as he stated, by a seafaring man. The admiral lifted up his glasses to examine the superscription. "From my worthless vagabond of a son!" exclaimed he, and he jerked the letter into the fire without breaking the seal.

"Surely, sir," rejoined the vicar, "it would be but justice to hear what he has to offer in extenuation of a fault too severely punished already. He is your only son, sir, and why not forgive one rash act? Recollect, sir, that he is the heir to this property, which, being entailed, must of necessity devolve upon him."

"Curses on the bare thought," answered the admiral with vehemence. "I hope to starve him first."

"May the Almighty show more mercy to you, sir, when you are called to your account, than you have shown to an imprudent and hasty child. We are told that we are to forgive, if we hope to be forgiven. Admiral De Courcy, it is

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my duty to ask you, do you expect (and if so, upon what grounds) to be forgiven yourself?"

The admiral looked towards the window and made no reply.

The letter, which had been thrown into the grate, was not yet consumed. It had lit upon a mass of not yet ignited coal, and lay there blackening in the smoke. The vicar perceived it, and walking to the fireplace, recovered the letter from its perilous situation.

"If you do not choose to read it yourself, admiral—if you refuse to listen to the solicitations of an only child, have you any objection that I should open the letter, and be acquainted with the present condition of a young man who, as you know, was always dear to me?"

"None, none," replied the admiral sarcastically. "You may read it, and keep it too, if you please."

The vicar, without any answer to this remark, opened the letter, which, as the reader may probably imagine, was the one written by Edward Peters on the morning of his execution.

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the man of religion, as he sat down to recover from the shock he had received. "Unfortunate boy!"

The admiral turned round, astonished at the demeanour of the clergyman, and (it would appear) as if his conscience had pressed him hard, and that he was fearful that his cruel wish, expressed but a few minutes before, had been realised. He turned pale, but asked no questions. After a short time the vicar rose, and, with a countenance of more indignation than the admiral or others had ever seen, thus addressed him:—

"The time may come, sir,—nay, I prophesy that it *will* come, when the contents of this letter will cause you bitterly to repent your cruel and unnatural conduct to your son. The letter itself, sir, I cannot entrust you with. In justice to others, it must not be put into your hands; and after your attempt to commit it to the flames, and your observation that I might read and *keep it too*, I feel justified in retaining it. A copy of it, if you please, I will send you, sir."

"I want neither copy nor original, nor shall I read them if you send them, good sir," answered the admiral, pale with anger.

"Fare you well, then, sir. May God turn your heart!"

So saying, the vicar left the room with a determination not

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to enter it again. His first inquiry was for the person who had brought the letter, and he was informed that he still waited in the hall. It was old Adams, who had obtained leave of absence for a few days, that he might fulfil the last request of Peters. The clergyman here received a second shock, from the news of the death of poor Ellen, and listened with the deepest interest to Adams' straightforward account of the whole catastrophe.

The first plan that occurred to the vicar was to send for the child, and take charge of him himself; but this was negatived, not only by Peters' letter, but also by old Adams, who stated his determination to retain the child until claimed by legal authority. After mature deliberation, he considered that the child would be as much under an All-seeing Eye on the water as on the land, and that, at so early an age, he was probably as well under the charge of a trustworthy old man like Adams as he would be elsewhere. He therefore requested Adams to let him have constant accounts of the boy's welfare, and to apply to him for any funds that he might require for his maintenance; and wishing the old man farewell, he set off for the vicarage, communing with himself as to the propriety of keeping the circumstance of the boy's birth a secret, or divulging it to his grandfather, in the hopes of eventually inducing him to acknowledge and to protect him.

## CHAPTER VII

To the seas presentlye went our lord admiral,  
With knights couragious and captains full good;  
The brave Earl of Essex, a prosperous general,  
With him prepared to pass the salt flood.

At Plymouth speedilye took they ship valiantlye,  
Braver ships never were seen under sayle,  
With their fair colours spread, and streamers o'er their head:  
Now, bragging foemen, take heed of your tayle.

*Old Ballad, 1596.*

**M**ANY and various were the questions that were put by our little hero to Adams and others relative to the fate of his parents. That they were both dead was all the information

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that he could obtain; for, to the honour of human nature, there was not one man in a ship's company composed of several hundred who had the cruelty to tell the child that his father had been hanged. It may, at first, appear strange to the reader that the child himself was not aware of the fact from what he had witnessed on the morning of execution; but it must be recollected that he had never seen an execution before, and had therefore nothing from which to draw such an inference. All he knew was, that his father was on the quarter-deck with a night-cap on, and that he told him that he was going to sleep. The death of his mother, whose body he was not permitted to see, was quite as unintelligible, and the mystery which enveloped the whole transaction added no little to the bereavement of the child, who, as I have before stated, from his natural talent and peculiar education, was far more reflective and advanced than children usually are.

Adams returned to his little charge with pleasure; he had now a right to adopt the child and consider him as his own. In the ship, the boy was such an object of general sympathy, that not only many of the men, but some of the officers, would gladly have taken him, and have brought him up. The name of his father was, by general consent, never mentioned, especially as Adams informed the officers and men that Peters had been a "*purser's name*," adopted by the child's father, and that, although the clergyman had stated this, he had not entrusted him with the real name that the child was entitled to bear. As, therefore, our little hero was not only without parents, but without name, he was rechristened by Adams by the cognomen of the "King's Own," and by that title, or his Christian name, Willy, was ever afterwards addressed, both by officers and men.

There is an elasticity supplied to the human mind by Unerring Wisdom, that enables us, however broken down by the pressure of misfortune, to recover our cheerfulness after a while, and resign ourselves to the decrees of Heaven. It consoles the widow; it supports the bereaved lover, who had long dwelt upon anticipated bliss; it almost reconciles to her lot the fond and forsaken girl whose heart is breaking.

Unusually oppressed as Willy was with the loss of those to whom he had so fondly clung from his birth, in a few months



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he recovered his wonted spirits, and his cheeks again played with dimples, as his flashing eye beamed from under his long eyelashes. He attached himself to the old quarter-master, and seldom quitted him ; he slept in his hammock ; he stood by his side when he was on deck at his duty, steering the ship ; and he listened to the stories of the good old man, who soon taught him to read and write. For three years thus passed his life, at the end of which period he had arrived at the age of nine years.

After a long monotony of blockade service, the ship was ordered to hoist the flag of a commodore, who was appointed to the command of an expedition against the western coast of France, to create a diversion in favour of the Vendean chiefs. Captain A——, whether it was that he did not like to receive a superior officer on board of his ship, or that he did not admire the service upon which she was to be employed, obtained permission to leave his ship for a few months for the restoration of his health, to the great joy of the officers and crew ; and an acting captain of well-known merit was appointed in his stead.

The squadron of men-of-war and transports was collected, the commodore's flag hoisted, and the expedition sailed with *most secret* orders, which, as usual, were as well known to the enemy, and everybody in England, as they were to those by whom they were given. It is the characteristic of our nation, that we scorn to take any unfair advantage or reap any benefit by keeping our intentions a secret. We imitate the conduct of that English tar who, having entered a fort, and meeting a Spanish officer without his sword, being providentially supplied with two cutlasses himself, immediately offered him one, that they might engage on fair terms.

The idea is generous, but not wise. But I rather imagine that this want of secrecy arises from all matters of importance being arranged by Cabinet councils. In the multitude of counsellors there may be wisdom, but there certainly is not secrecy. Twenty men have probably twenty wives, and it is therefore twenty to one but the secret transpires through that channel. Further, twenty men have twenty tongues ; and much as we complain of women not keeping secrets, I suspect that men deserve the odium of the charge quite as much, if not more, than women do. On the whole, it is forty

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to one against secrecy, which, it must be acknowledged, are long odds.

On the arrival of the squadron at the point of attack, a few more days were thrown away,—probably upon the same generous principle of allowing the enemy sufficient time for preparation. Troops had been embarked, with the intention of landing them, to make a simultaneous attack with the shipping. Combined expeditions are invariably attended with delay, if not with disagreement. An officer commanding troops, who, if once landed, would be as decided in his movements as Lord Wellington himself, does not display the same decision when out of his own element. From his peculiar situation on board,—his officers and men distributed in different ships,—the apparent difficulties of debarkation, easily remedied, and despised by sailors, but magnified by landsmen,—from the great responsibility naturally felt in a situation where he must trust to the resources of others, and where his own, however great, cannot be called into action, he will not decide without much demur upon the steps to be taken; although it generally happens that the advice originally offered by the naval commandant has been acceded to. Unless the military force required is very large, marines should invariably be employed, and placed under the direction of the naval commander.

After three or four days of *pros* and *cons*, the enemy had completed his last battery, and as there was then no rational excuse left for longer delay, the debarkation took place, without any serious loss on our side, except that of one launch, full of the —— Regiment, which was cut in halves by the enemy's shot. The soldiers, as they sank in the water, obeyed the orders of the sergeant, and held up their cartouch-boxes, that they might not be wetted two seconds sooner than necessary,—held fast their muskets,—and, without stirring from the gunnels of the boat, round which they had been stationed, went down in as good order as could be expected, each man at his post, with his bayonet fixed. The sailors, not being either so heavily caparisoned or so well drilled, were guilty of a *sauve qui peut*, and were picked up by other boats. The officer of the regiment stuck to his men, and it is to be hoped that he marched the whole of his brave detachment to heaven, as he often had before to church. But

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we must leave the troops to form on the beach as well as they can, and the enemy's shot will permit, and retire on board.

The commodore's arrangement had been punctually complied with. The ships that were directed to cover the landing of the troops knocked down many of the enemy, and not a great many more of our own men. The stations of the other ships were taken with a precision deserving of the highest encomiums; and there is no doubt that, had not the enemy had the advantage of stone walls, they must have had the worst of it, and would have been well beaten.

The commodore himself, of course, took the post of honour. Anchored with springs on his cables, he alternately engaged a heavy battery on his starboard bows, a much heavier, backed by a citadel, throwing shells, on his beam, and a masked battery on his quarter, which he had not reckoned upon. The latter was rather annoying, and the citadel threw shells with most disagreeable precision. He had almost as much to do as Lord Exmouth at Algiers, although the result was not so fortunate.

A ship engaging at anchor, with very little wind, and that wind lulled by the percussion of the air from the report of the guns, as it always is, has the disadvantage of not being able to disengage herself of the smoke, which rapidly accumulates and stagnates as it were between the decks. Under these circumstances you repeatedly hear the order passed upon the main and lower deck of a line-of-battle ship to point the guns two points abaft the beam, point-blank, and so on. In fact, they are as much in the dark as to the external objects as if they were blindfolded; and the only comfort to be derived from this serious inconvenience is, that every man is so isolated from his neighbour that he is not put in mind of his own danger by witnessing the death of those around him, for they may fall three or four feet from him without his perceiving it; so they continue to fire as directed, until they are either sent down to the cockpit themselves, or have a momentary respite from their exertions, when, choked with smoke and gunpowder, they go aft to the scuttle-butt to remove their parching thirst. So much for the lower and main deck. We will now ascend to the quarter-deck, where we shall find old Adams at the conn, and little Willy standing behind him.

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The smoke is not so thick here but that you may perceive the commodore on the poop, walking a step or two to starboard, and then turning short round to port. He is looking anxiously through his glass at the position of the troops, who are ashore to storm the batteries, hoping to see a diversion in our favour made by them, as the affair becomes serious. By a singular coincidence, the commandant of the troops on shore is, with his telescope, looking anxiously at the shipping, hoping the same thing from the exertions of the navy. The captain of marines lies dead upon the poop; both his legs have been shot off by a spent shot. He is left there, as no surgeon can help him; and there are two signalmen lying dead alongside him.

On the hammock-nettings of the quarter-deck stands the acting captain of the ship, erect, and proud in bearing, with an eye of defiance and scorn as he turns towards the enemy. His advice was disregarded, but he does his duty proudly and cheerfully. He is as cool and unconcerned as if he were watching the flying-fish as they rise from the bows of the ship when running down the tropics, instead of the enemy's shot, as they splash in the water alongside, or tear open the timbers of the vessel and the bodies of his crew. The men still ply their half-manned guns; but they are exhausted with fatigue, and the bloody deck proves that many have been dismissed from their duty. The first-lieutenant is missing; you will find him in the cockpit. They have just finished taking up the arteries of his right arm, which has been amputated; and the Scotch surgeon's assistant, who for many months bewailed the want of practice, and who, for having openly expressed his wishes on that subject, had received a sound thrashing from the exasperated midshipmen, is now complimenting the fainting man upon the excellent stump that they have made for him: while fifty others, dying or wounded, with as much variety as Homer's heroes, whose blood, trickling from them in several rivulets, pours into one general lake at the lowest level of the deck, are anxiously waiting their turn, and distract the purser's steward by their loud calls, in every direction at the same time, for the tin-pot of water, with which he is relieving their agonising thirst.

A large shark is under the counter; he is so gorged with human flesh that he can scarcely move his tail in the tinged

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water, and he now hears the sullen plunges of the bodies, as they are launched through the lower-deck port, with perfect indifference. "Oh, what a glorious thing's a battle!"

But to return to our particular narrative. As we mentioned before, the citadel threw shells with remarkable precision, and every man who had been killed on the quarter deck of the commodore's ship, towards which the attention of the enemy was particularly directed, had been laid low by these horrible engines of modern warfare. The action still continued, although the fire on both sides had evidently slackened, and the commodore's glass had at several intervals been fruitlessly directed towards the troops on shore, when accident brought about a change in favour of our countrymen. Through some unknown cause, the magazine of the enemy's largest battery exploded, and buried the fabric with its tenants in one mass of ruin. The enemy were panic-struck with their misfortune, our troops and sailors inspired with fresh courage, and the fire was recommenced with three cheers and redoubled vigour. The troops pushed on, and succeeded in taking possession of the masked battery, which had so long and so effectually raked the commodore.

A few minutes after this had occurred the citadel recommenced its fire, and a shell, descending with that terrific hissing peculiar to itself alone, struck the main-bitts on the quarter-deck, and, rolling aft, exploded. Its fragments scattered death around, and one piece took the hat off the head of little Willy, who was standing before Adams, and then buried itself in the old man's side. He staggered forward, and fell on the coils of rope near the companion-hatch; and when the men came to assist him below, the pain of moving was so intense that he requested to be left where he was, that he might quietly breathe his last.

Willy sat down beside his old friend, holding his hand. "A little water, boy—quick, quick!" It was soon procured by the active and affectionate child, who, indifferent to the scene around him, thought only of administering to the wants and alleviating the misfortune of his dearest friend. Adams, after he had drunk, turned his head round, apparently revived, and said, in a low and catching voice, as if his powers were fast escaping, "Willy, your father's name was not Peters. I do not know what it was; but there is a person who does,

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and who takes an interest in your welfare. He lives in——”

At this moment another shell bounded through the rigging and fell within a few feet of the spot where Willy and old Adams were speaking. Willy, who was seated on a coil of rope supporting the head of his benefactor, no sooner perceived the shell as it rolled towards the side, with its fuse pouring out a volume of smoke, than, recollecting the effects of the former explosion, rather than the danger of the attempt, he ran towards it, and not being able to lift it, sank down on his knees, and with astonishing agility, succeeded in rolling it overboard, out of the larboard entering-port, to which it was near. The shell plunged into the water, and, before it had descended many feet, exploded with a concussion that was communicated to the ship fore and aft. Our hero then resumed his station by the side of Adams, who had witnessed what had taken place.

“You have begun well, my boy,” said the old man faintly. “There’s ne’er a man in the ship would have done it. Kiss me, boy.”

The child leaned over the old man and kissed his cheek, clammy with the dews of death. Adams turned a little on one side, uttered a low groan, and expired.

## CHAPTER VIII

Now dash’d upon the billow,  
Our opening timbers creak,  
Each fears a watery pillow.

To cling to slippery shrouds  
Each breathless seaman crowds,  
As she lay  
Till the day  
In the Bay of Biscay O!—*Sea Song.*

AS it will only detain the narrative, without being at all necessary for its development, I shall not dwell upon the results of the engagement, which was soon after decided, with very indifferent success on our side. The soldiers were



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re-embarked, the ships hauled out of reach of the enemy's guns, and a council of war summoned; on which it was agreed, *nem. con.*, that no more was to be done. The despatches were sent home; they certainly differed a little, but that was of no consequence. The sum total of killed and wounded was excessively gratifying to the nation, as it proved that there had been hard fighting. By-the-bye, John Bull is rather annoying in this respect; he imagines that no action can be well fought unless there is a considerable loss. Having no other method of judging of the merits of an action, he appreciates it according to the list of killed and wounded. A merchant *in toto*, he computes the value of an object by what it has cost him, and imagines that what is easily and cheaply obtained cannot be of much value. The knowledge of this peculiar mode of reasoning on his part has very often induced officers to put down very trifling contusions, such as a prize-fighter would despise, to swell up the sum total of the loss to the aggregate of the honest man's expectations.

To proceed. As usual in cases of defeat, a small degree of accusation and recrimination took place. The army thought that the navy might have beaten down stone ramparts ten feet thick; and the navy wondered why the army had not walked up the same ramparts, which were thirty feet perpendicular. Some of the ships accused others of not having had a sufficient number of men killed and wounded; and the boats' crews, whenever they met on shore, fought each other desperately, as if it were absolutely necessary, for the honour of the country, that more blood should be spilt. But this only lasted three weeks, when a more successful attempt made them all shake hands, and wonder what they had been squabbling about.

There was, however, one circumstance which occurred during the action that had not been forgotten. It had been witnessed by the acting captain of the ship, and had been the theme of much comment and admiration among the officers and men. This was the daring feat of our little hero in rolling the shell over the side. Captain M—— (the new commander), as soon as his more important avocations would permit, made inquiries among the officers (being himself a stranger in the ship) relative to Willy. His short but melancholy history was soon told, and the disconsolate boy was summoned from

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under the half-deck, where he sat by the body of Adams, which, with many more, lay sewed up in his hammock and covered over with the union-jack, waiting for the evening, to receive the rites of Christian burial, before being committed to the deep.

Knowing that Adams had been his only protector, a feeling of compassion for the bereaved and orphan boy, and admiration of his early tokens of bravery, induced Captain M——, who never formed a resolution in haste, or abandoned it if once formed, to take the boy under his own protection, and to place him as an officer on that quarter-deck upon which he had so distinguished himself. Willy, in obedience to orders received, stood by the captain, with his hat in his hand.

"What is your name, my boy?" said the captain, passing a scrutinising glance over his upright and well-proportioned figure.

"Willy, sir."

"And what's your other name?"

"King's Own, sir."

This part of the boy's history was now explained by the second-lieutenant, who was in command in consequence of the first-lieutenant being wounded.

"He must have a name," replied the captain. "William King's Own will not do. Is he on the books?"

"No, sir, he is not; shall I put him down as William Jones or William Smith?"

"No, no; those are too common. The boy has neither father, mother, nor name, that we know of: as we may, therefore, have a choice of the latter for him, let it be a good one. I have known a good name make a man's fortune with a novel-reading girl. There is a romance in the boy's history; let him have a name somewhat romantic also."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the lieutenant. "Here, marine, tell my boy to bring up one of the volumes of the novel in my cabin."

The book made its appearance on the quarter-deck. "Perhaps, sir, we may find one here," said the lieutenant, presenting the book to the captain.

The captain smiled as he took the book. "Let us see," said he, turning over the leaves—"Delamere!—that's too puppyish. 'Fortescue!—don't like that. 'Seymour!—Yes,

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that will do. It's not too fine, yet aristocratic and pretty. Desire Mr. Hinchin, the clerk, to enter him on the books as Mr. William Seymour, midshipman. And now, youngster, I will pay for your outfit and first year's mess; after which I hope your pay and prize-money will be sufficient to enable you to support yourself. Be that as it may, as long as you do credit to my patronage I shall not forget you."

Willy, with his straw hat in one hand, and a supererogatory touch of his curly hair with the other, made a scrape with his left leg, after the manner and custom of seafaring people; in short, he made the best bow that he could, observing the receipt that had been given him by his departed friend Adams. D'Egville might have turned up his nose at it, but Captain M—— was perfectly satisfied, for, if not an elegant, it certainly was a grateful bow.

Our young officer was not sent down to mess in the berth of the midshipmen. His kind and considerate captain was aware that a lad who creeps in at the hawse-holes—i.e., is promoted from before the mast—was not likely to be favourably received in the midshipmen's mess, especially by that part of the community who, from their obscure parentage, would have had least reason to complain. He was therefore consigned to the charge of the gunner.

Sincere as were the congratulations of the officers and men, Willy was so much affected with the loss of his fond guardian, that he received them with apathy, and listened to the applause bestowed upon his courage with tears that flowed from the remembrance of the cause which had stimulated him to the deed. At the close of the day he saw the body of his old friend committed to the deep with quivering lips and aching brow, and as it plunged into the clear wave, felt as if he was left alone in the world, and had no one to love and to cling to.

We do not give children credit for the feelings which they possess, because they have not, at their early age, acquired the power of language to express them correctly. Treat a child as you would an equal, and in a few months you will find that the reason of his having until then remained childish was because he had heretofore been treated as a being of inferior capacity and feelings. True it is that at an early age the feelings of children are called forth by what

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we consider as trifles; but we must recollect, in humility, that our own pursuits are as vain, as trifling, and as selfish—"We are but children of a larger growth."

The squadron continued to hover on the French coast, with a view of alarming the enemy, and of making a more fortunate attempt if opportunity occurred. Early in the morning of the fourth day after Willy had been promoted to the quarter-deck, a large convoy of *chasse-marées* (small coasting-vessels, lugger rigged) were discovered rounding a low point not three miles from the squadron. A general signal to chase was immediately thrown out, and in half-an-hour the English men-of-war were in the midst of them, pouring broadside after broadside upon the devoted vessels, whose sails were lowered in every direction in token of submission. The English men-of-war reminded you of so many hawks pouncing upon a flight of small birds; and the vessels, with their lowered sails just flapping with the breeze, seemed like so many victims of their rapacity, who lay fluttering on the ground, disabled or paralysed with terror. Many escaped into shoal water, others ran ashore, some were sunk, and about twenty taken possession of by the ships of the squadron. They proved to be part of a convoy laden with wine, and bound to the Garonne.

One of the *chasse-marées*, being a larger vessel than the rest, and laden with wine of a better quality, was directed by the commodore to be sent to England; the casks of wine on board of the others were hoisted into the different ships, and distributed occasionally to the crews. Captain M—— thought that the departure of the prize to England would be a favourable opportunity to send our hero to receive his outfit, as he could not well appear on the quarter-deck as an officer without his uniform. He therefore directed the master's mate, to whose charge the prize was about to be confided, to take William with him, and wrote to his friends at Portsmouth, whither the vessel was directed to proceed, to fit him out with the requisite articles, and send him back by the first ship that was directed to join the squadron. The prize was victualled, the officer received his written orders, was put on board with our hero and three men, and parted company with the squadron.

The master's mate, who was directed to take the vessel to

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Portsmouth, was the spurious progeny of the first-lieutenant of a line-of-battle ship and a young woman who attended the bumboat which supplied the ship's company with necessaries and luxuries, if they could afford to pay for them. The class of people who obtain their livelihood by these means, and who are entirely dependent upon the navy for their subsistence, are naturally anxious to secure the goodwill of the commanding officers of the ships, and usually contrive to have on their establishment a pretty-looking girl, who, although very reserved to the junior officers of the ship, is all smiles to the first-lieutenant, and will not stand upon trifles for the benefit of her employer. Beauty for men—gold for women! Such are the glittering baits employed in this world to entice either sex from the paths of duty or discretion.

The service was indebted to this species of bribery for the officer in question. The interest of his supposed father was sufficient to put him on the quarter-deck, and the profits of his mother, who, having duly served her apprenticeship, had arrived to the dignity of bumboat woman herself, and was a fat, comely matron of about forty years of age, were more than sufficient to support him in his inferior rank. His education and natural abilities were not, however, of that class to procure him either friends or advancement, and he remained in the capacity of master's mate, and was likely long to continue so, unless some such event as a general action should include him in a promotion which would be regulated by seniority. He was a mean-looking, vulgar little man, with a sharp face and nose—the latter very red, from the constant potations of not only his own allowance, but of that of every youngster in the ship whom he could bully or cajole.

His greatest pride and his constant study was "slang," in which he was no mean proficient. He always carried in his pocket a colt (*i.e.*, a foot and a half of rope, knotted at one end, and whipped at the other), for the benefit of the youngsters, to whom he was a most inordinate tyrant. He could *fudge* a day's work, which he sent in with the rest of the midshipmen, and which proofs of theoretical knowledge of their profession were in those days little attended to; but he was very ignorant, and quite unfit to take charge

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of any vessel. Captain M——, who, as we before stated, had joined the ship as acting captain, and had not had time to ascertain the merits or demerits of the officers, had given the prize to his charge because he was the senior mate of the ship.

The prize had scarcely trimmed her sails and shaped her course, when Mr. Bullock, the master's mate, called our hero to him, and addressed him in the following elegant phraseology:—

"Now, you rebellious spawn—touch your hat, you young whelp"—(knocking off poor Willy's only hat, which flew to leeward and went overboard)—"mind what I say, for I mean to be as good as a father to you. You're not an officer yet—and if you were, it would be all the same—so no capers, no airs. You see I've only three men in the vessel besides myself; they are in three watches; so your duty will be to attend to me in the cabin. You'll mull my claret; I always drinks a noggin every half-hour to keep the wind out, and if it an't ready and an't good—do you see this?"—(taking the colt out of his pocket.)—"Stop; you'd better feel it at once, and then, when you knows what the taste of it is, you'll take care how you're slack in stays." So saying, he administered three or four hearty cuts on the back and shoulders of our hero, who had been sufficiently drilled into the manners and customs of a man-of-war to know the value of the proverb, "The least said, the soonest mended."

A spigot had been already inserted into one of the casks of claret which were lashed on deck; and, as the small vessel was very uneasy in the heavy swell of the Bay of Biscay, our hero had sufficient employment in watching the pot of claret, and preventing it from being upset by the motion of the vessel, as it was constantly heating on the stove in the cabin. This potation was regularly presented by Willy every half-hour, as directed, to his commanding officer, who, if it was too sweet, or not sweet enough, or if he could not drink the whole, invariably, and much to the annoyance of our hero, threw the remainder into his face, telling him that was his share of it.

This arrangement continued in full force for three days and three nights; for Willy was roused up five or six times every night to administer the doses of mulled claret which Mr.



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Bullock had prescribed for himself, who seemed, thin and meagre as he was, to be somewhat like a bamboo in his structure (*i.e.*, hollow from top to bottom), as if to enable him to carry the quantity of fluid that he poured down his throat during the twenty-four hours. As for intoxicating him, that appeared to be impossible; from long habit, he seemed to be like a stiff ship that careened to her bearings, and would sooner part company with her masts than heel any farther.

On the fourth day a strong gale sprang up from the north-west, and the sea ran very high. The *chasse-marée*, never intended to encounter the huge waves of the Bay of Biscay, but to crawl along the coast and seek protection from them on the first indication of their fury,—labouring with a heavy cargo, not only stowed below, but on the decks,—was not sufficiently buoyant to rise on the summits of the waves, which made a clean breach over her, and the men became exhausted with the wet and the inclemency of the season. On the third day of the gale, and seventh since they had parted company with the fleet, a squall brought the mainmast by the board; the foresail was lowered to close-reef, when a heavy sea struck the vessel, and pouring a torrent over her decks, swept overboard the three men who were forward reefing the sail. Mr. Bullock, the master's mate, was at the helm; Willy, as usual, down below, attending the mulled claret, which had been more than ever in request since the bad weather had come on.

The mate quitted the helm, and ran forward to throw a rope to the seamen who were struggling in the water with the wreck to leeward. He threw one, which was seized by two of them (the other had sunk); and as soon as they had hold of it and it became taut from their holding on, he perceived, to his dismay, that he had stood on the remaining part of the coil, and that it had encircled itself several times round his body, so that the men were hauling him overboard. "Let go, let go, or I'm overboard!" was a useless exclamation to drowning men; they held on, and the mate too held on by the rigging for his life, the efforts of the drowning men dragging him at last from off his legs, and keeping his body in a horizontal position, as they hauled at his feet, and he clung in desperation to the lee-shrouds. "Willy, Willy, a knife—quick, quick!" roared the mate in his agony.

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Willy, who, hearing his name called, and followed up by the "Quick, quick," had no idea that anything but the mulled claret could demand such unusual haste, stopped a few seconds to throw in the sugar and stir it round before he answered the summons. He then started up the hatchway with the pot in his hand.

But these few seconds had decided the fate of Mr. Bullock, and as Willy's head appeared up the hatchway, so did that of Mr. Bullock disappear as he sank into a grave so dissonant to his habits. He had been unable to resist any longer the united force of the drowning men, and Willy was just in time to witness his submersion, and find himself more destitute than ever. Holding on by the shroud with one hand, with the pot of mulled claret in the other, Willy long fixed his eyes on the spot where his tyrannical shipmate had disappeared from his sight, and forgetting his persecution, felt nothing but sorrow for his loss. Another sea, which poured over the decks of the unguided vessel, roused him from his melancholy reverie, and he let go the pot, to cling with both hands to the rigging as the water washed over his knees; then, seizing a favourable opportunity, he succeeded in regaining the cabin of the vessel, where he sat down and wept bitterly—bitterly for the loss of the master's mate and men, for he had an affectionate and kind heart—bitterly for his own forlorn and destitute situation. Old Adams had not forgotten to teach him to say his prayers, and Willy had been accustomed to read the Bible, which the old man explained to the best of his ability. The vessel laboured and groaned as she was buffeted by the waves, the wind howled, and the sea struck her trembling sides and poured over her decks. In the midst of this wild discord of the elements, the small voice of the kneeling child, isolated from the rest of the world, and threatened soon to be removed from it, was not unheard or unheeded by an omniscient and omnipotent God, who has said that not a sparrow should fall to the ground without His knowledge, and has pointed out of how much more value are we than many sparrows.

Willy ended his devotions and his tears, and, feeling wet and cold, recollected that what would warm his departed friend the mate would probably have the same effect upon him. He crawled up the companion-hatch with another tin

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pot, and having succeeded in obtaining some wine from the cask, returned to the cabin. Having warmed it over the fire, and sugared it according to the well-practised receipt of Mr. Bullock, he drank more of it than, perhaps, in any other situation he would have done, and lying down in the standing bed-place at the side of the cabin, soon fell into a sound sleep.

### CHAPTER IX

And there he went ashore without delay,  
Having no custom-house nor quarantine  
To ask him awkward questions on the way  
About the time and place where he had been :  
He left his ship to be hove down next day.

*Don Juan.*

THE prize vessel, at the time when she carried away her masts, had gained considerably to the northward of Ushant, although the master's mate, from his ignorance of his profession, was not aware of the fact. The wind, which now blew strongly from the N.W., drove the shattered bark up the Channel, at the same time gradually nearing her to the French coast. After twenty-four hours' driving before the storm, during which Willy never once awoke from his torpor, the vessel was not many leagues from the port of Cherbourg. It was broad daylight when our hero awoke ; and after some little time necessary to chase away the vivid effects of a dream, in which he fancied himself to be on shore, walking in the fields with his dear mother, he recollected where he was and how he was situated. He ascended the companion-ladder and looked around him. The wind had nearly spent its fury, and was subsiding fast ; but the prospect was cheerless—a dark wintry sky and rolling sea, and nothing living in view except the sea-bird that screamed as it skimmed over the white tops of the waves. The mizzen of the vessel was still hoisted up, but the sheet had disengaged itself from the belaying-pin, and the sail had been rent from the bolt-rope by the storm. Part of it was blown away, and the rest, jagged and tattered at its extremities from constant buffeting, flapped " mournfully to and fro " with the heavy rolling of the vessel.

Willy, holding only the companion-hatch, scanned the hori-

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zon in every point of the compass in hopes of succour, but for a long while in vain. At last his keen eye detected a small vessel, under a single close-reefed sail, now rising on the tops of the waves, now disappearing in the deep trough of the sea. She was sloop-rigged, and running down towards him.

In a quarter of an hour she had neared to within a mile, and Willy perceived with delight that the people were on deck, and occasionally pointing towards him. He ran down below, and opening the chest of Mr. Bullock, which was not locked, took a liberty which he would never have dared to contemplate during that worthy officer's lifetime, viz., that of putting forth one of his two best white shirts, reserved for special occasions. This he took on deck, made it fast to a boat-hook staff, and hoisted as a signal of distress. He did also mechanically lift his hand to his head with the intention of waving his hat, but he was reminded, by not finding it there, that it had been the first votive offering which had been made to appease the implacable deities presiding over the winds and waves. The vessel closed with him, hove-to to windward, and after some demur, a small boat, capable of holding three persons, was hoisted over the gunnel, and two hands, jumping into her, rowed under the stern of the wreck.

"You must jump, my lad; there's no going alongside a craft, without any sail to steady her, in such a sea as this. Don't be afraid. We'll pick you up."

Willy, who had little fear in his composition, although he could not swim, leaped from the taffrail of the vessel into the boiling surge, and immediately that he rose to the surface was rescued by the men, who, seizing him by the waistband of the trousers, hauled him into the boat and threw him down in the bottom under the thwarts. Then, without speaking, they resumed their oars and pulled to the other vessel, on board of which they succeeded in establishing our hero and themselves, although the boat was stove in the attempt and cast adrift as useless.

Willy's teeth chattered and his whole frame trembled with the cold as he went aft to the captain of the sloop, who was sitting on deck wrapped up in a rough white great-coat, with his pipe in his mouth. The captain was a middle-sized, slightly-made young man, apparently not more than twenty-five years old. His face was oval, with a remarkably pleasing expression;

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his eyes small and brilliant; and notwithstanding the roughness of his outward attire, there was a degree of precision in the arrangement of his hair and whiskers which proved that with him neatness was habitual. He had a worsted mitten on his left hand; the right, which held his pipe, was bare, and remarkably white and small. Perceiving the situation of the boy, he called to one of the men, "Here, Phillips, take this poor devil down and put something dry on him, and give him a glass of brandy; when he's all right again, we'll find out from him how he happened to be adrift all by himself, like a bear in a washing-tub. There, go along with Phillips, boy."

"He's of the right sort," said one of the men who had brought him on board, casting his eyes in the direction of our hero, who was descending the companion. "I thought so when I see'd him have his wits about him to hoist the signal. He made no more of jumping overboard than a Newfoundland dog—never stopped two seconds to think on't."

"We shall soon see what he is made of," replied the captain, relighting his pipe, which had been allowed to go out during the time that they were rescuing Willy and the men from the boat when she returned.

Willy was soon provided with more comfortable clothing; and whether it was or was not from a whim of Phillips, who had been commissioned to rig him out, he appeared on deck the very picture of the animal which he had been compared to by the sailor. Thick woollen stockings, which were longer than both his legs and thighs, a pair of fisherman's well-greased boots, a dark Guernsey frock that reached below his knees, and a rough pea-jacket that descended to his heels, made him appear much broader than he was high. A red woollen nightcap completed his attire, which, although anything but elegant, was admirably calculated to assist the brandy in restoring the circulation.

"Here he is, captain, all a-tanto, but not very neat," said Phillips, shoving Willy up the hatchway; for he was so encumbered with the weight of his new apparel that he never could have ascended without assistance. "I have stowed away some spirits in his hold, and he no longer beats the devil's tattoo with his grinders."

"Now, my lad," said the captain, taking his pipe out of his mouth, "tell me what's your name, what you are, and



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how you came to be adrift in that barky. Tell me the truth—be honest, always be honest; it's the best policy."

Now, it rather unfortunately happened for Willy that these two first questions were rather difficult for him to answer. He told his story with considerable hesitation—*believed* his name was Seymour—*believed* he was a midshipman. He was listened to without interruption by the captain and crew of the vessel, who had gathered round to hear him "spin his yarn." When he had finished, the captain, looking Willy very hard in the face, thus addressed him:—"My little friend, excuse me, but I have some slight knowledge of the world, and I therefore wish that you had not forgotten the little advice I gave you, as a caution, before you commenced your narrative. Did not I say, *Be honest?* You *believe* you are an officer—*believe* your name to be Seymour. I tell you, my lad, in return, that I don't believe a word that you say; but, however, that's of no consequence. It requires reflection to tell a lie, and I have no objection to a little invention, or a little caution with strangers. All that about the battle was very clever; but still, depend upon it, honesty's the best policy. When we are better acquainted I suppose we shall have the truth from you. I see the land on the lee-bow; we shall be into Cherbourg in an hour, when I expect we shall come to a better understanding."

The *Sainte Vierge*—for such was the name of the vessel, which smelt most insufferably of gin, and, as our readers may probably have anticipated, was a smuggler, running between Cherbourg and the English coast—soon entered the port, and having been boarded by the officers of the *Douane* (who made a very proper distinction between smuggling from and to their own territories), came to an anchor close to the mole. As soon as the vessel was secured the captain went below, and in a few minutes reappearing, dressed in much better taste than one-half of the saunterers in Bond Street, went on shore to the cabaret where he usually took up his quarters, taking with him our hero, whose strange attire, so peculiarly contrasted with that of the captain's, was a source of great amusement to the sailors and other people who were assembled on the quay.

"*Ah, mon capitaine, charmé de vous revoir. Buons un coup, n'est-ce pas?*" said the proprietor of the cabaret, presenting



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a bottle of prime French brandy and a liquor-glass to the captain as he entered.

"*Heureux voyage, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur ?*"

"*Ça va bien,*" replied the captain, throwing the glass of liquor down his throat. "My apartments, if you please, and a bed for this lad. Tell Mr. Beaujou, the slopseller, to come here directly with some clothes for him. Is Captain Debriseau here?"

"He is, sir,—lost all his last cargo—obliged to throw over in deep water."

"Never mind; he ran the two before; he can afford it."

"Ah! but Captain Debriseau is in a very bad humour nevertheless. He called me an old cheat this morning; *c'est incroyable.*"

"Well, present my compliments to him, and say that I request the honour of his company, if he is not otherwise engaged. Come, youngster."

The landlord of the cabaret ushered the captain of the sloop and our hero, with many profound bows, into a low, dark room, with only one window, the light from which was intercepted by a high wall not four feet distant. The floor was paved with tiles; the table was deal, not very clean; and the whitewashed walls were hung around with stiff drawings of several smuggling vessels, whose superior sailing, and consequent good fortune, had rendered them celebrated in the port of Cherbourg. The straw had been lighted under some logs of wood on the hearth, which as yet emitted more smoke than flame; a few chairs, an old battered sofa, and an upright press completed the furniture.

"I knew your beautiful sloop long before she came in—there's no mistaking her; and I ordered the apartment *de Monsieur* to be prepared. *C'est un joli appartement, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur ?* So retired!" With some forbearance, but with great judgment, the beauty of the prospect was not expatiated upon by the obsequious landlord.

"It will do to smoke and eat in, Mons. Picardon, and that is all that I require. Now bring pipes and tobacco, and take my message to Captain Debriseau."

The latter gentleman and the pipes were ushered in at the same moment.

"M'Elvina, my dear fellow, I am glad to see that you have had better luck than I have had this last trip. Curses on

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the cutter. *Sacristie !*” continued Captain Debriseau, who was a native of Guernsey, “the wind favoured her three points after we were about, or I should have doubled him—ay, and have doubled the weight of the leathern bag too. *Sacré nom de Dieu !*” continued he, grinding his teeth and pulling a handful of hair out of his rough head, which could have spared as much as Absalom used to poll, “*que ça me fait bisquer.*”

“*Bah ! laissez aller, mon ami*—sit down and take a pipe,” rejoined our captain. “This is but pettifogging work at the best ; it won’t pay for the means of resistance. My lugger will be ready in May, and then I’ll see what a revenue cutter is made of. I was at Ostend last Christmas, and saw her. By Jove ! she’s a beauty ! She was planked above the watermark then, and must be nearly ready for launching by this time. I’ll pass through the Race but once more ; then adieu to dark nights and south-west gales, and huzza for a row of teeth, with the will, as well as the power, to bite. Sixteen long nines, my boy !”

“Quick returns, though—quick returns, messmate,” answered Debriseau, referring to the Cherbourg system of smuggling, which, being his own means of livelihood, he did not like to hear disparaged.

For the benefit of those who have no objection to unite a little information with amusement, I shall here enter into a few remarks relative to the smuggling carried on between the port of Cherbourg and our own coast, premising that my readers have my entire approbation to skip over a page or two if they are not anxious to know anything about these nefarious transactions.

The port of Cherbourg, from its central situation, is better adapted than any other in France for carrying on this trade with the southern coast of England. The nearest port to it, and at which, therefore, the smuggling is principally carried on, is the Bill of Portland, near to the fashionable watering-place of Weymouth.

The vessels employed in this contraband trade, of which gin is the staple commodity, are generally small luggers or sloops, from forty to sixty tons burthen. In fine summer weather row-boats are occasionally employed ; but as the *run* is only of twenty-four hours’ duration, the dark nights and south-west gales are what are chiefly depended upon.

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These vessels are not armed with an intention to resist ; if they are perceived by the cruisers or revenue vessels before they arrive on the English coast, and are pursued, they are obliged (if not able to escape, from superior sailing) to throw over their cargo in "deep water," and it is lost. The cargo is thrown overboard to avoid the penalty and imprisonment to which it would subject the crew, as well as the confiscation of the vessel and cargo. If they reach the English coast, and are chased by the revenue vessels, or have notice by signals from their agents on shore that they are discovered, and cannot land their cargoes, they take the exact bearings and distances of several points of land, and with heavy stones sink their tubs of spirits, which are always strung upon a hawser like a row of beads. There the cargo is left, until they have an opportunity of going off in boats to creep for it, which is by dragging large hooks at the bottom until they catch the hawser and regain possession of their tubs. Such is the precision with which their marks are taken, and their dexterity from continual practice, that they seldom fail to recover their cargo. The profits of this contraband trade are so great, that if two cargoes are lost, a third safely landed will indemnify the owners.

I must now observe, much to the discredit of the parties who are concerned, that this contraband trade is not carried on by individuals, but by a company ; one hundred pound shares are taken of "*a speculation*," the profits of which are divided yearly ; and many individuals residing on the coast, who would be thought incapable of lending themselves to such transactions, are known to be deeply interested.

The smuggling from Havre and Ostend, &c., is confined to the coast of Ireland and the northern shores of England ; the cargoes are assorted and of great value ; and as the voyage and risk are greater, they are generally fast-sailing vessels, well manned and armed, to enable them to offer resistance, when the disparity of force is not too great on their side.

Captain M'Elvina had taken up the smuggling trade between Cherbourg and Portland to keep himself employed until a fine lugger of sixteen guns, the command of which had been promised to him, and which was intended to run between Havre and the coast of Ireland, should be ready ; whereas Captain Debriseau had been all his life employed in the Cherbourg trade, and had no intention of quitting it.

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"But what have you got there, Mac?" said Debriseau, pointing with his pipe to our hero, who sat on the leathern sofa, rolled up in his uncouth attire. "Is it a bear or a boy?"

"A boy that I picked up from a wreck. I am thinking what I shall do with him; he is a smart, bold lad."

"By Jupiter!" rejoined Debriseau, "I'll make him my Ganymede, till he grows older."

Had Willy been as learned in mythology as Captain Debriseau, he might have informed him that he had served in that capacity in his last situation under Mr Bullock; but although the names, as appertaining to a ship, were not unknown to him, yet the attributes of the respective parties were a part of his education that old Adams had omitted.

"He will be fit for anything," rejoined our captain, "if he will only be honest."

"M'Elvina," said Debriseau, "you always have these words in your mouth, 'Be honest.' Now as, between ourselves, I do not think that either you or I are leading very honest lives, allow me to ask you why you continually harp upon honesty when we are alone? I can easily understand the propriety of shamming a little before the world."

"Debriseau, had any other man said half as much, I would have started my grog in his face. It's no humbug on my part. I mean it sincerely; and, to prove it, I will now give you a short sketch of my life; and after you have heard it, I have no doubt but that you will acknowledge, with me, the truth of the old adage, that 'Honesty is the best policy.'"

But Captain M'Elvina must have a chapter to himself.

## CHAPTER X

He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of his life, I pronounce he will be a great man in history.—*Beggar's Opera.*

IT is an old proverb that 'one half of the world do not know *how* the other half live.' Add to it, nor *where* they live, and it will be as true. There is a class of people, of whose existence the public are too well aware, but of whose resorts and

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manners and customs among their own fraternity they are quite as ignorant now as they were one hundred years back. Like the Chinese and the castes of the East, they never change their profession, but bequeath it from father to son, as an entailed estate from which they are to derive their subsistence. The class to which I refer consists of those members of the community at large who gain their livelihood by inserting their hands into the pockets of other people. Not but that all the world are doing the same thing, and have, since the creation; but then it is only as *amateurs*;—the class that I refer to do it *professionally*, which, you must observe, makes a wide difference. From this class I am lineally descended, and at an early age was duly initiated into all the mysteries of my profession. I could filch a handkerchief as soon as I was high enough to reach a pocket, and was declared to be a most promising child.

“I must do my father and mother the justice to acknowledge, that while they initiated me in the mysteries of my future profession, they did not attempt to conceal that there were certain disagreeable penalties attached to ‘greatness;’ but when prepared from our earliest years, we look forward to our fate with resignation; and, as I was invariably told, after my return from some daring feat, that my life would be a short and a merry one, I was not dismayed at the words of my prophetic mother, who observed, ‘Patrick, my boy, if you don’t wish to bring my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, promise me to confine yourself to picking pockets; you will then only be transported. But if you try your hand at higher work, you’ll be hung before you’re twenty.’ My father, when I returned with a full assorted cargo, and emptied my pockets into his hands with as much rapidity as I had transferred the contents of others into my own, used to look at me with a smile of pride and satisfaction, and shaking his head, would exclaim, ‘Pat, you’ll certainly be hung.’

“Accustomed, therefore, from my infancy to consider twenty summers, instead of threescore years and ten, as the allotted space of my existence, I looked forward to my exit from this world by the new drop with the same placidity as the nobleman awaits the time appointed for the entrance of his body into the vault containing the dust of his ancestors. At the age of eleven years I considered myself a full-grown



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man, dared all that man could do, and was a constant but unwilling attendant upon the police-office, where my youth, and the promises of my mother that I should be reformed, assisted by showers of tears on her part, and by apparent ingenuousness on mine, frequently pleaded in my favour with the prosecutors.

"I often lamented, when at that early age, that my want of education prevented me from attempting the higher walks of our profession; but this object of my ambition was gained at last. I had taken a pocket-book from a worthy Quaker, and, unfortunately, was perceived by a man at a shop-window, who came out, collared and delivered me into the hands of the prim gentleman. Having first secured his property, he then walked with me and a police-officer to Bow Street. My innocent face and my tears induced the old gentleman, who was a member of the Philanthropic Society, not only not to prefer the charge against me, but to send me to the institution at Blackfriars Road.

"I made rapid progress under their tuition, and after three years' close application on my part, and continual inculcation on the part of my instructors of the distinction between *meum* and *tuum*, I was considered not only a very clever boy, but a reformed character. The Quaker gentleman who had placed me in the institution, and who was delighted with the successful results of his own penetration, selected me as his servant, and took me home."

"Well, I'm glad you were so soon reformed," said Debriseau. "Where the devil's my handkerchief?"

"Oh, I've not got it," answered M'Elvina, laughing. "But you are as much mistaken now as the Quaker was at that time. A wild beast may be tamed, and will remain so provided he be not permitted again to taste blood. Then all his ferocious propensities will reappear, and prove that his education has been thrown away. So it was with me. At first I felt no desire to return to my old employment, and had not my master trusted me too much, I might have remained honest. You often hear masters exclaiming against the dishonesty of servants. I know it to be a fact that most of them have been made dishonest by the carelessness of their employers in having allowed temptations to lie in their way which were too strong to be resisted. My



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master used to send me up to his bureau for small sums which he required out of a yellow canvas bag full of gold and silver. I am convinced that he frequently used to give me the key, when in company with his friends, in order that, after I had left the room, he might tell my history and prove the beneficial effects of the society. One day the yellow bag and I both disappeared.

"I threw off the modest grey coat in which I was equipped, and soon procured more fashionable attire. I looked in the glass and scarcely knew myself; I had, therefore, no fear of being recognised by my former master. Not wishing to be idle, I hired myself out as tiger and valet to a young nobleman, who was spending ten thousand pounds a year upon an allowance of seven hundred. He was a complete *roué*, and I must gratefully own that I learnt a great deal from him, independently of the secret of tying my neckcloth correctly; but we soon parted."

"How was that?" said Debriseau, knocking the ashes out of his pipe.

"Why, he had several diamond rings, and as he only wore two or three at a time, I sported the others at our parties. A malicious fellow, who was envious of the dash I cut, observed in my hearing that it was impossible to tell real stones from good paste. I took the hint, and one by one the diamonds vanished and paste usurped their places. Shortly after, the creditors, not being able to touch my master's money or his person, seized his effects, and the diamond rings were almost the only articles which escaped. My master, who always looked out for a rainy day, had collected these rings as a sort of standby, to 'raise the wind' when required. By ill luck he took them to the same jeweller who had been employed by me to substitute the paste, and to whom I had sold the real stones. He came home in a great rage, accused me of dishonesty, and sent for a constable. I told him that I did not consider his conduct to be that of a gentleman, and wished him good morning. I had indeed intended to quit him, as he was done up, and only waited his return to tell him so. I had moved my trunks, accordingly, before he was out of bed. I believe a few of his suits and some of his linen were put in with mine in my extreme haste; but then he owed me wages.

"When I wished his lordship good morning, I certainly

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imagined that I had little more to learn, but I must acknowledge that I was mistaken. I knew that there was a club established for servants out of place, and had been a subscriber for two years, as there were many advantages arising from it, independently of economy. I was now a member by right, which as long as I was in place I was not. To this club I repaired, and I soon found that I, who fancied myself perfect, was but a tyro in the profession. It was a grand school certainly, and well organised. We had our president, vice-president, auditors of accounts, corresponding members, and our secretary. Our seal was a bunch of green poplar rods, with '*Service is no inheritance*' as a motto.

"But not to weary you with a life of adventures which would fill volumes, I shall merely state that I was in place, out of place, following up my profession in every way with great credit among our fraternity, until one day I found myself, after a tedious confinement in Newgate, decorated with a yellow jacket and pair of fetters, on board of a vessel of three hundred tons burthen, bound to New South Wales. We sailed for Sydney, where I had been recommended, by the gentleman in a large wig, to remain seven years for change of air. The same night that the vessel came into the Cove, having more liberty than the rest of my shipmates (from my good behaviour during the passage), I evaded the sentry, and slipping down by the cable into the water, swam to a ship lying near, which, I had been informed, was to sail on the ensuing day for India.

"The captain, being very short of hands, headed me up in a cask; and, although the vessel was not permitted to sail until very strict search had been made for me, I was not discovered, and it was supposed that I had been drowned in making the attempt. Aware that it would not be good for my health to return previously to the expiration of the seven years, I determined to learn a new *profession*—that of a sailor, for which I always had a predilection; besides, it quieted my conscience as to the impropriety of not submitting to the just punishment of the law, as you will acknowledge that seven years at sea and seven years' transportation are one and the same thing. From Batavia I went to Calcutta, and worked before the mast in the country vessels to Bombay and the Persian Gulf for four years when I thought myself capable of

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taking higher rank in the service, if I could get it, especially as I had picked up sufficient navigation to be able to work the ship's reckoning.

"At Calcutta I obtained a situation as second mate of a fast-sailing schooner employed in the smuggling of opium into China, and, after three voyages, rose to the office of chief mate. Had I remained another voyage I should have been captain of the vessel; but my seven years were out, and I was anxious to return to England and look the 'Robin Red-breasts' boldly in the face. I had saved enough money to pay my passage, and was determined to go home like a gentleman, if I had not exactly gone *out* in that character. What little cash remained after my passage was paid I lost at play to an army officer who was returning in the same ship.

"When I landed at Portsmouth, I retained a suit of 'long togs,' as we call them, and disposing of all the rest of my stock to the Jews, I started for London. On my arrival I found that my father and mother were both dead, and I was meditating upon my future course of life, when an accident determined me. I picked up a pocket-book."—(Here Captain Debriseau eyed him hard.)—"I know what you mean," continued M'Elvina, "but it *was* on the pavement, and not *in a pocket*, as you would imply by your looks. It was full of slips and scraps of paper of all sorts, which I did not take the trouble to read. The only available articles it contained were three one-pound notes. The owner's name and address were written on the first blank leaf. I cannot tell what possessed me, but I had an irresistible desire to be honest once in my life, and the temptation to be otherwise not being very great, I took the pocket-book to the address, and arrived at the house just as the old gentleman to whom it belonged was giving directions to have it advertised. He was in evident perturbation at his loss, and I came just at the fortunate moment. He seized his book with rapture, examined all the papers, and counted over the bills and notes.

"'Honesty is a scarce commodity, young man,' said he as he passed the leathern tongue of the book through the strap. 'You have brought me my book without waiting till a reward was offered. I desired my clerk to offer twenty guineas in the advertisement; I will now give you a larger sum.' He

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sat down, opened a cheque-book, and wrote me a draft on his banker. It was for one hundred pounds! I was profuse in my acknowledgments, while he replaced his book in his inside pocket and buttoned up his coat. 'Honesty is a scarce commodity, young man,' repeated he; 'call here to-morrow at one o'clock, and I will see if I can be of any further service to you.'

"I returned to my lodgings in a very thoughtful mood. I was astonished at the old man's generosity, and still more at my having honestly obtained so large a sum. I went to bed, and reflected on what had passed. The words of the old gentleman still rang in my ears—'Honesty is a scarce commodity.' I communed with myself. Here have I been nearly all my life exercising all my talents, exerting all my energies, in dishonest practices, and when did I, even at the most successful hit, obtain as much money as I have by an honest act? I recalled the many days of anxious waiting that I had found necessary to accomplish a scheme of fraud—the doubtful success—the necessity of satisfying my associates—the inability of turning into ready money the articles purloined until the hue-and-cry was over—the trifling sum which I was obliged to take from the purchasers of stolen articles, who knew that I was at their mercy—the destitute condition I occasionally was in, and the life of constant anxiety that I had led. These reflections forced the truth upon my mind that there was more, in the end, to be gained by honesty than by roguery.

"Once convinced, I determined to lead a new life, and from that moment I assumed as my motto, 'Honesty is the best policy.' Do you hear, youngster?—always be honest."

## CHAPTER XI

Through tattered clothes small vices do appear;  
Robes and furred gowns hide all. *Lear.*

**W**ILLY, who was tired out with the extreme mental and bodily exertion that he had undergone, gave no answer to M'Elvina's injunction, except a loud snore, which satisfied the captain that his caution in this instance was not heard.

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"Well," said Debriseau after a short pause, "how long did this honest fit last?"

"What do you mean? How long did it last? Why, it has lasted, Captain Debriseau—it has lasted until now; and shall last, too, as long as this frame of mine shall hold together. But to proceed. The next morning I called upon the old gentleman according to his request. He again told me 'honesty was a scarce commodity.' I could have informed him that it had always been so with me, but I kept my own counsel. He then asked me what were my profession and pursuits. Now, as I had two professions to choose between, and as my last was considered to be just as abundant in the commodity he prized so much, as my former one was known to be deficient, I replied that I was a seafaring man. 'Then I may find some employment for you,' replied the old gentleman; and having put several questions to me as to the nature of the service I had seen, he desired me to take a walk till three o'clock, when he would be happy to see me at dinner. 'We'll then be able to have a little conversation together without being overheard.'

"I was exact to my appointment, and my old friend, who was punctuality itself, did not allow me to remain in the parlour two minutes before dinner was on the table. As soon as it was over, he dismissed the servant-girl who attended, and turned the key in the door. After sounding me on many points during a rapid discussion of the first bottle of port, he proceeded to inform me that a friend of his wanted a smart fellow as captain of a vessel, if I would like the employment. This suited me; and he then observed that I must have some notion of how officers were managed, as I had been in the China trade, and that he thought that the vessel was to be employed in the contraband trade on the English coast.

"This startled me a little, for I was afraid that the old gentleman was laying a trap for my newly acquired commodity; and I was about to refuse with some slight show of indignation, when I perceived a change in his countenance indicative of disappointment; so I only demurred until he had sufficient time to prove that there was no dishonesty in the transaction, when, being convinced that he was in earnest, I consented. Before the second bottle was finished



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I found out that it was not for a friend, but for himself, and for one of his own vessels, that he was anxious to procure a smart captain; and that he had a large capital embarked in the concern, which was very profitable. The pocket-book which I had returned was of no little importance; had it fallen into other hands, it might have told tales.

"I have now been three years in the old gentleman's employ, and a generous, good master he has been; and his daughter is a sweet, pretty girl. I lost my last vessel, but not until she had cleared him £10,000; and now the old gentleman is building me another at Havre. Not to be quite idle, I have in the meantime taken command of one of their sloops; for the old gentleman has a good many shares in the *speculation*, and his recommendations are always attended to."

"*Voici, Monsieur Beaujou, avec les habits,*" said the *maître d'auberge*, opening the door and ushering in the *marchand des modes maritimes* with a huge bundle.

"Now then, boy, rouse out," said M'Elvina, shaking our hero for a long while, without any symptoms of recovering him from his lethargy.

"Try him on the other tack," said the captain, lifting him off the sofa and placing him upright on his legs.

"There's no sugar in it yet," said Willy, who was dreaming that he was supplying the mulled claret to the old master's mate.

"Ah!" said Debriseau, laughing, "he thinks his mamma is giving him his tea."

"The lying little rascal told me this morning that he had no mother. Come, Mr. William Seymour, I *believe*" (mimicking)—"officer, I *believe*. Oh, you're a nice, honest boy. Have you a mother, or do you tell fibs in your sleep as well as awake? 'Be honest.'"

The last words, that Willy had heard repeated so often during the day, not only unsealed his eyes, but recalled to his recollection where he was.

"Now, my youngster, let us rig you out; you recollect you stated that you were going home for your outfit, and now I'll give you one, that you may have one fib less on your conscience."

By the generosity of M'Elvina, Willy was soon fitted with two suits of clothes, requiring little alteration, and Mr.



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Beaujou, having received a further order for a supply of shirts and other articles necessary to complete the outfit, made his bow and disappeared.

The two captains resumed their chairs, and our hero again coiled himself on the sofa, and in one minute was as sound asleep as before.

"And now, M<sup>rs</sup> Elvina," resumed Debriseau, "I should like to know by what arguments your employer contrived to reconcile your present vocation with your punctilious regard for honesty. For I must confess, for my own part, that although I have followed smuggling as a livelihood, I have never defended it as an honest calling, and have looked forward with occasional impatience to the time when I should be able to leave it off."

"Defend it! Why, I'll just repeat to you the arguments used by the old gentleman. They convinced me. As I said before, I am always open to conviction. Captain Debriseau, you will acknowledge, I trust, that laws are made for the benefit of all parties, high and low, rich and poor?"

"Granted."

"You'll allow, also, that law-makers should not be law-breakers; and that if they are so, they cannot expect that others will regard what they disregard themselves?"

"Granted also."

"Once more—by the laws of our country, the receiver is as bad as the thief, and they who instigate others to commit an offence are equally guilty with the offending party."

"It cannot be denied," replied Debriseau.

"Then you have acceded to all the propositions that I wish, and we shall come to an undeniable and mathematical conclusion. Observe, law-makers should not be law-breakers. Who enacted these laws?—the aristocracy of the nation, seated in their respective Houses, the Lords and the Commons. Go, any night you please, to the Opera, or any other place of public resort in which you can have a view of their wives and daughters. I'll stake my existence that every female there shall be dizenied out in some contraband article of dress—not one but shall prove to be a receiver of smuggled goods, and, therefore, as bad as those whom they have instigated to infringe the laws of their country. If there were no demand there would be no supply."

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"Surely they don't *all* drink gin?" replied Debriseau.

"Drink gin! You're thinking of your d——d Cherbourg trade; your ideas are confined. Is there nothing smuggled besides gin? Now, if the husbands and fathers of these ladies—those who have themselves enacted the laws—wink at their infringement, why should not others do so? The only distinction between the equally offending parties is, that those who are in power—who possess all the comforts and luxuries which this world can afford—who offend the laws from vanity and caprice, and entice the needy to administer to their love of display, are protected and unpunished; while the adventurous seaman, whose means of supporting his family depend upon his administering to their wishes, or the poor devil who is unfortunately detected with a gallon of spirits, is thrown into jail as if he were a felon. There cannot be one law for the rich and another for the poor, Debriseau. When I hear that the wives of the aristocracy have been seized by the revenue officers, and the contraband articles which they wear have been taken off their backs, and that they have been sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment by a committal from the magistrate, then—and not till then—will I acknowledge our profession to be dishonest."

"Very true," said Debriseau; "it shows the folly of men attempting to make laws for their masters."

"Is it not shocking," continued M'Elvina, "to reflect upon the conduct of the magistrate who has just sentenced perhaps four or five unhappy wretches to a dungeon for an offence against these laws? He leaves the seat of justice, and returns to the bosom of his family. Hear his wife" (mimicking)—"'Well, my dear, you're come at last; dinner has been put back this half-hour. I thought you would never have finished with those odious smugglers.' 'Why, my love, it was a very difficult case to prove; but we managed it at last, and I have signed the warrant for their committal to the county jail. They're sad, troublesome fellows, these smugglers.' Now look at the lady: 'What dress is that you put on to greet your husband?' 'Gros de Naples de Lyon.'—'The lace it is trimmed with?' 'Valenciennes.'—'Your gloves, madam?' 'Fabrique de Paris.'—'Your ribands, your shoes, your handkerchief?' All, all contraband. Worthy magistrate, if you would hold the scales of justice with an

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even hand, make out one more mittimus before you sit down to table. Send your wife to languish a twelvemonth in company with the poor smugglers, and then 'to dinner with what appetite you may.' And now, Debriseau, have I convinced you that I may follow my present calling, and still say, 'Be honest'?"

"Why, yes, I think we both may; but would not this evil be removed by free trade?"

"Heaven forbid!" replied M'Elvina, laughing; "then there would be no smuggling."

## CHAPTER XII

Love me, love my dog.

*Proverb.*

IT is the misfortune of those who have been in constant habits of deceit that they always imagine others are attempting the same dishonest practices. For some time M'Elvina felt convinced that our little hero had swerved from truth in the account which he gave of himself; and it was not until after repeated catechisings, in which he found that, strange and improbable as the narrative appeared, Willy never altered from or contradicted his original statement, that he believed the boy to be as honest and ingenuous as might have been inferred from his prepossessing countenance.

To this conviction, however, did he arrive at last; and our hero—who seemed no sooner to have lost one protector than to have the good fortune to find another—became the favourite and companion of his new captain, instead of his domestic, as had been originally contemplated. A lad of Willy's age, who is treated with kindness and consideration, is soon attached, and becomes reconciled to any change of circumstances. It was a matter of indifference to our hero whether he was on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war or in the cabin of a smuggling sloop. Contented with his present lot, with the happy thoughtlessness of youth, he never permitted the future to disturb his repose or affect his digestion.

Willy had been nearly a month at Cherbourg when M'Elvina's sloop took in another cargo. "Willy," said M'Elvina one evening as they sat together in the apartment

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at the cabaret, "to-morrow I shall, in all probability, sail for the English coast. I have been thinking what I shall do with you. I do not much like parting with you; but, on reflection, I think it will be better that I should leave you behind. You can be of no use, and may be in the way if we should be obliged to take to our boat."

Willy pleaded hard against this arrangement. "I never have a friend but I lose him directly," said the boy, and the tears started into his eyes.

"I trust you will not lose me, my dear fellow," replied M'Elvina, moved at this proof of affection; "but I must explain to you why I leave you. In the first place," added he, laughing, "with that mark on your shoulder, it would be felony without benefit of clergy for you to be found in my possession; but of that I would run the risk. My serious reasons are as follow:—If this trip proves fortunate, I shall not return to Cherbourg. I have business of importance in London, which may require my presence for some weeks in that metropolis and its vicinity. I told you before that I am about to take the command of a very different vessel from this paltry sloop, and upon a more dangerous service. In four or five months she will be ready to sail, and during that time I shall be constantly on the move, and shall hardly know what to do with you. Now, Willy, you are not aware of the advantages of education—I am; and as mine was given to me by strangers, so will I in return bestow as much upon you as I can afford. You must, therefore, go to school until my return. You will at least acquire the French language, and you will find that of no little use to you hereafter."

Willy, accustomed to discipline and to breathe the air of passive obedience, submitted without raising any more objections. Debriseau joined, and they all three sallied forth to make arrangements for placing our hero *en pension* where they had been recommended. Having effected this, they agreed to lounge on the Place d'Armes till sunset, when they took possession of one of the benches. M'Elvina and Debriseau lighted their cigars and puffed away in silence, while Willy amused himself with watching the promenaders as they passed in review before him.

They had not remained there many minutes when a poodle-dog, *bien tendu*, and white as a sheep from the river before

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the day of shearing, walked up to them with an air of sagacious curiosity, and looked M'Elvina steadfastly in the face. M'Elvina, taking his cigar from his mouth, held it to the dog, who ran up to it, as if to smell it; the lighted end coming in contact with his cold nose induced the animal to set up a loud yell and retreat to his master much faster than he came, passing first one fore-paw and then the other over his nose, to wipe away the pain, in such a ridiculous manner as to excite loud merriment, not only from our party on the bench, but also from others who had witnessed the scene.

"So much for curiosity," said M'Elvina, continuing his mirth. The proprietor of the dog, a young Frenchman, dressed very much *en calicot*, did not, however, seem quite so much amused with this practical joke; he cocked his hat fiercely on one side, raised his figure to the utmost of its height, and walking up *en grand militaire*, addressed M'Elvina with "*Comment, monsieur, vous avez fait une grande bêtise-là; vous m'insultez—*"

"I think I had better not understand French," said M'Elvina aside to Debriseau; then turning to the Frenchman with a grave face and air of incomprehension—"What did you say, sir?"

"Ah! you are Inglisman. You not speak French?"

M'Elvina shook his head and began to puff away at his cigar.

"Den, sare, if you not speak de French language, I speak de Inglis like von natif, and I tell you, sare, *que vous m'avez insulté*. Got for dam! you burnt my dog nose; vat you mean, sare?"

"The dog burnt his own nose," answered M'Elvina mildly.

"Vat you mean? De dog burnt his own nose! How is a dog cap-able to burn his own nose? Sare, you put de cigar to my dog nose. I must have de satisfaction or de apology *tout de suite*."

"But, sir, I have not insulted *you*."

"Sare, you insult my dog; he is von and de same ting—*mon chien est un chien de sentiment*. He feel de affront all de same vid me; I feel de affront all de same vid him. *Vous n'avez qu'd choisir, monsieur*."

"Between you and your dog?" answered M'Elvina. "Well, then, I'd rather fight the dog."



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"Bah ! fight de dog. De dog cannot fight, sare ; *mais je suis son maître et son ami*, and I vill fight for him."

"Well, then, monsieur, I did insult your dog, I must acknowledge, and I will give him the satisfaction which you require."

"And how vill you give de satisfaction to de dog ?"

"Why, sir, you said just now that he was *un chien de beaucoup de sentiment*. If he is so, he will accept and properly appreciate my apology."

"Ah, sare !" replied the Frenchman, relaxing the stern wrinkles of his brow, "*c'est bien dit* ; you will make de apology to de dog. *Sans doute* he is de principal ; I am only de second. *C'est une affaire arrangée. Moustache, viens ici, Moustache*" (the dog came up to his master). "*Monsieur est très-fâché de l'avoir brûlé le nez.*"

"Monsieur Moustache," said M'Elvina, taking off his hat with mock gravity to the dog, who seemed determined to keep at a respectful distance, "*je vous demande mille excuses.*"

"Ah ! *que c'est charmant !*" cried some of the fair sex, who, as well as the men, had been attracted by, and were listening to the dispute. "*Que Monsieur l'Anglais est drôle ; et voyez Moustache, comme il a l'air content. Vraiment c'est un chien d'esprit. Allez, Moustache,*" said his master, who was now all smiles, "*donnez la patte à monsieur—donnez donc.* Ah, sare ! he forgive you, I am very sure ; *il n'a pas de malice.* But he is afraid of de cigar. De burnt shild dred de vater, as your great Shakespeare say."

"*C'est un chien de talent ; il a beaucoup de sentiment. Je suis bien fâché de l'avoir blessé, monsieur.*"

"*Et monsieur parle Français ?*"

"I should esteem myself fortunate if I spoke your language as well as you do mine," replied M'Elvina in French.

This compliment, before so many bystanders, completely won the heart of the vain and choleric Frenchman.

"Ah, sare ! you are too complaisant. I hope I shall have de pleasure to make your acquaintance. *Je m'appelle Monsieur Auguste de Poivre. J'ai l'honneur de vous présenter une carte d'adresse.* I live on de top of my mother's—*sur l'entresol*. My mother live on de ground—*rez-de-chaussée*. Madame *ma mère* will be delighted to receive a monsieur of so much wit and adresse." So saying, away went Monsieur Auguste



## THE KING'S OWN

de Poivre, followed by Moustache, who was "*all von and de same ting.*"

"Well, we live and learn," said M'Elvina, laughing, as soon as the Frenchman was at a little distance; "I never thought that I should have made an apology to a dog."

"Oh, but," replied Debriseau, "you forget that he was *un chien de sentiment.*"

"You may imagine, from my behaviour, that I consider him a wiser puppy than his master, for he ran away from fire, whereas his master tried all he could to get into it. Some of our countrymen would have humoured him, and turned a comedy into a tragedy. I set a proper value on my life, and do not choose to risk it about trifles."

"There has been more than one valuable life thrown away about a dog in my remembrance," said Debriseau. "I think you behaved in a sensible manner to get rid of the affair as you did, but you would have done better not to have burnt the dog's nose."

"Granted," replied M'Elvina; "the more so as I have often remarked that there is no object in the world, except your children or your own self, in which the *meum* is so powerful and the *tuum* so weak. You caress your own dog, and kick a strange one; you are pleased with the clamorous barking of your own cur, and you curse the same noise from another. The feeling is as powerful almost as that of a mother, who thinks her own ugly cub a cherub compared to others, and its squallings the music of the spheres. It is because there is no being that administers so much to the self-love of his master. He submits with humility to the blows inflicted in the moment of irritation and licks the hand that corrects. He bears no revengeful feelings, and is ready to fondle and caress you the moment that your good-humour returns. He is, what man looks in vain for among his kind, a faithful friend, without contradiction—the *very perfection of a slave*. The abject submission on his part, which would induce you to despise him, becomes a merit when you consider his courage, his fidelity, and his gratitude. I cannot think what Mahomet was about when he pronounced his fiat against them as *unclean*."

"Well," said Debriseau, "I agree with Mahomet that they are *not clean*, especially puppies. There's that little beast at Monsieur Picardon's; I declare——"

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"Pooh!" interrupted M'Elvina, laughing, "I don't mean it in that sense. I mean that, in a despotic country, the conduct of a dog towards his master should be held up as an example for imitation; and I think that the banner of the Moslem should have borne the dog, instead of the crescent, as an emblem of blind fidelity and tacit submission."

"That's very true," said Debriseau; "but, nevertheless, I wish mademoiselle's puppy were either taught manners or thrown over the quay."

"*Ce n'est pas un chien de sentiment*," replied M'Elvina, laughing. "But it is nearly dark. *Allons au cabaret*."

They returned to the inn; and the wind on the ensuing morning blowing strong from a favourable quarter, Willy and Debriseau accompanied M'Elvina down to the mole, from whence he embarked on board of the sloop, which was already under way, and in the course of an hour was out of sight.

On the following day Captain Debriseau accompanied Willy to the *pension*, where our hero remained nearly five months, occasionally visited by the Guernsey captain when he returned from his smuggling trips, and more rarely receiving a letter from M'Elvina, who had safely landed his cargo, and was latterly at Havre, superintending the fitting out of his new vessel. Our hero made good progress during the few months that he remained at the *pension*, and when M'Elvina returned to take him away, not only could speak the French language with fluency, but had also made considerable progress in what Sir W. C—— used to designate in his toast as "the three R's"—viz., "Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic."

The lugger which had been built for M'Elvina by his employer was now ready, and bidding farewell to Debriseau, who continued in the Cherbourg trade, our hero and his protector journeyed *en diligence* to Havre.

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER XIII

Through the haze of the night a bright flash now appearing,  
"Oh, ho!" cried Will Watch, "the Philistines bear down;  
Bear a hand, my tight lads, ere we think about sheering,  
One broadside pour in, should we swim, boys, or drown."  
*Sea Song.*

NOW, Willy, what do you think of *La Belle Susanne*?" said M'Elvina as they stood on the pier, about a stone's-throw from the vessel, which lay with her broadside towards them. Not that M'Elvina had any opinion of Willy's judgment, but, from the affectionate feeling which every sailor imbibes for his own ship, he expected gratification even in the admiration of a child. The lugger was certainly as beautiful a model of that description of vessel as had ever been launched from a slip. At the distance of a mile, with the sea running, it was but occasionally that you could perceive her long black hull, so low was she in the water, and so completely were her bulwarks pared down; yet her breadth of beam was very great and her tonnage considerable, as may be inferred when it is stated that she mounted sixteen long brass nine-pounders and was manned with one hundred and thirty men. But now that she was lying at anchor in smooth water, you had an opportunity of examining, with the severest scrutiny, the beautiful run of the vessel as she sat graceful as a diver, and appeared, like that aquatic bird, ready to plunge in at a moment and disappear under the wave cleft by her sharp fore-foot and rippling under her bows.

"When shall we sail?" inquired Willy, after bestowing more judicious encomiums upon the vessel than might be expected.

"To-morrow night, if the wind holds to the southward. We took in our powder this morning. Where were you stationed at quarters on board the ——?"

"Nowhere. I was not on the ship's books until a day or two before I left her."

"Then you must be a powder-monkey with me; you can hand powder up, if you can do nothing else."

## THE KING'S OWN

"I can do more," replied Willy proudly; "I can roll shells overboard."

"Ay, ay, so you can; I forgot that. I suppose I must put you on the quarter-deck, and make an officer of you, as Captain M—— intended to do."

"I mean to stand by you when we fight," said Willy, taking M'Elvina's hand.

"Thank you; that may not be so lucky. I'm rather superstitious; and, if I recollect right, your old friend Adams had that honour when he was killed."

The name of old Adams being mentioned made Willy silent and unhappy. M'Elvina perceived it; the conversation was dropped, and they returned home.

A few days afterwards *La Belle Susanne* sailed, amidst the shouts and *vivas* of the multitude collected on the pier, and a thousand wishes for "*succès*" and "*bon voyage*," the builder clapping his hands and skipping with all the simial ecstasy of a Frenchman at the encomiums lavished upon his vessel as she cleaved through the water with the undeviating rapidity of a barracouta. But the *vivas*, and the shouts, and the builder, and the pier that he capered on were soon out of sight, and our hero was once more confiding in the trackless and treacherous ocean.

"Well, she *does* walk," said Phillips, who had followed the fortunes of his captain, and was now looking over the quarter of the vessel. "She must be a clipper as catches us with the tacks on board! Right in the wind's eye too; clean full. By the powers! I believe if you were to lift her, she would lay a point on the other side of the wind."

"Get another pull of the fore-halyards, my lads," cried M'Elvina. "These new ropes stretch most confoundedly. There, belay all that; take a *severe* turn, and don't come up an inch."

The breeze freshened, and the lugger flew through the water, dashing the white spray from her bows into the air, where it formed little rainbows as it was pierced by the beams of the setting sun.

"We shall have a fine night, and light weather towards the morning, I think," said the first-mate, addressing M'Elvina.

"I think so too. Turn the hands up to muster by the quarter-bell. We'll load the guns as soon as the lights are

## THE KING'S OWN

out ; let the gunner fill forty rounds, and desire the carpenter to nail up the hatchway-screens. Let them be rolled up and stopped. We'll keep them up for a *full due*, till we return to Havre."

The crew of the lugger were now summoned on deck by the call of the boatswain, and having been addressed by Captain M'Elvina upon the absolute necessity of activity and preparation in a service of such peculiar risk, they loaded the guns and secured them for the night.

The crew consisted of about eighty or ninety Englishmen, out of the full complement of one hundred and thirty men ; the remainder was composed of Frenchmen and other Continental adventurers. Although the respective countries were at variance, the subjects of each had shaken hands, that they might assist each other in violating the laws. The quiet and subordination of a king's ship were not to be expected here,—loud and obstreperous mirth, occasional quarrelling, as one party, by accident or intention, wounded the national pride of the other. French, English, and Irish, spoken alternately or at the same moment, created a degree of confusion which proved that the reins of government were held lightly by the captain in matters of small importance ; but although there was a general freedom of manner and independence of address, still his authority was acknowledged and his orders implicitly obeyed. It was a ship's company which *pulled every way*, as the saying is, when there was nothing to demand union ; but let difficulty or danger appear, and all their squabbling was forgotten, or reserved for a more seasonable opportunity ; then they all pulled together, those of each nation vying in taking the lead and setting an example to the other.

Such was the crew of the lugger which M'Elvina commanded, all of whom were picked men, remarkable for their strength and activity.

As the first-mate had predicted, the wind fell light after midnight, and at dawn of day the lugger was gliding through the smooth water at the rate of three or four miles an hour, shrouded in a thick fog. The sun rose, and had gained about twenty degrees of altitude, when M'Elvina beat to quarters, that he might accustom his men to the exercise of the guns. The rays of the sun had not power to pierce

## THE KING'S OWN

through the fog ; and, shorn of his beams, he had more the appearance of an overgrown moon, or was, as Phillips quaintly observed, "like a man disguised in woman's attire."

The exercise of the guns had not long continued, when the breeze freshened up and the fog began partially to disperse. Willy, who was perched on the roundhouse abaft, observed a dark mass looming through the mist on the weather beam. "Is that a vessel?" said Willy, pointing it out to the first-mate, who was standing near M'Elvina.

"Indeed it is, my boy," replied the mate ; "you've a sharp eye of your own."

M'Elvina's glass was already on the object. "A cutter right before the wind, coming down to us ; a Government vessel of some sort or another, I'll swear. I trust she's a revenue cruiser ; I have an account to settle with those gentlemen. Stay at your quarters, my lads ; hand up shot and open the magazine !"

The powerful rays of the sun, assisted by the increasing wind, now rolled away the fog from around the vessels, which had a perfect view of each other. They were distant about two miles, and the blue water was strongly rippled by the breeze which had sprung up. The lugger continued her course on a wind, while the cutter bore down towards her with all the sail she could throw out. The fog continued to clear away, until there was an open space of about three or four miles in diameter. But it still remained folded up in deep masses, forming a wall on every side, which obscured the horizon from their sight. It appeared as if nature had gratuitously cleared away a sufficient portion of the mist, and had thus arranged a little amphitheatre for the approaching combat between the two vessels

"His colours are up, sir. Revenue stripes, by the Lord !" cried Phillips.

"Then all's right," replied M'Elvina.

The cutter had now run down within half-a-mile of the lugger, who had continued her course with the most perfect nonchalance, when she rounded-to. The commander of the vessel, aware, at the first discovery of the lugger, that she could be no other than an enemy, who would most probably give him some trouble, had made every preparation for the engagement.



## THE KING'S OWN

"Shall we hoist any colours, sir?" said the first-mate to M'Elvina.

"No; if we hoist English, he will not commence action until he has made the private signal, and all manner of parleying, which is quite unnecessary. He knows what we are well enough."

"Shall we hoist a French ensign, sir?"

"No; I'll fight under no other colours than those of old England, even when I resist her authority."

A long column of white smoke now rolled along the surface of the water as the cutter, who had waited in vain for the colours being hoisted, fired the first gun at her antagonist. The shot whizzed between the masts of the lugger and plunged into the water a quarter of a mile to leeward.

"*A vous, monsieur!*" roared out a French quarter-master on board of the lugger, in imitation of the compliments which take place previously to an *assaut d'armes*, at the same time taking off his hat and bowing to the cutter.

"Too high, too high, good Mr. Searcher," said M'Elvina, laughing; "depress your guns to her water-line, my lads, and do not fire until I order you."

The remainder of the cutter's broadside was now discharged at the lugger, but the elevation being too great, the shot whizzed over, without any injury to her crew; the main-halyards were, however, shot away, and the yard and sail fell thundering down on the deck.

"Be smart, my lads, and bend on again; it's quite long enough. Up with the sail and we'll return the compliment."

In less than a minute the tie of the halyards, which had been divided close to the yard, was hitched round it, and the sail again expanded to the breeze. "Now, my lads, remember, don't throw a shot away; fire when you're ready."

The broadside of the lugger was poured into the cutter, with what effect upon the crew could not be ascertained; but the main-boom was cut in half, and the outer part of it fell over the cutter's quarter and was dragged astern by the clew of the sail.

"It's all over with her already," said the first-mate to M'Elvina; and as the cutter paid off before the wind another broadside from her well-manned antagonist raked her fore and aft. The cutter hauled down her jib, eased off her

## THE KING'S OWN

fore-sheet, and succeeded in again bringing her broadside to bear. The action was now maintained with spirit, but much to the disadvantage of the cutter, who was not only inferior in force, but completely disabled from the loss of her main-boom.

After an exchange of a dozen broadsides M'Elvina shot the lugger ahead, and tacking under his adversary's bows, raked him a second time. The commander of the revenue vessel, to avoid a repetition of a similar disaster, payed his vessel off before the wind, and returned the fire as they came abreast of each other; but in these manœuvres the lugger obtained the weather-gage. It was, however, a point of little consequence as matters then stood. In a few more broadsides the cutter was a complete wreck, and unable to return the fire of her opponent. Her fore-stay and halyards had been cut away, her fore-sail was down on deck, and her jib lying overboard under her bows.

"I think that will do," said M'Elvina to the first-mate. "We had better be off now, for our guns will be sure to bring down some of the cruisers; and if she surrendered, I could not take possession of her. Let's give her a parting broadside and three cheers."

M'Elvina's orders were obeyed; but not one gun was returned by the cutter. "Starboard a little; keep her away now, and we'll close and stand ahead of her, that she may read our name on the stern. It's a pity they should not know to whom they are indebted. They'll not forget *La Belle Susanne*."

The cutter had not been left a mile astern before the breeze freshened and the fog began rapidly to disperse; and Phillips, who continued at the conn, perceived through the haze a large vessel bearing down towards them.

"High time that we were off, indeed, captain; for there's a cruiser, if I mistake not. A gun here is the same to the cruiser as a splash in the water is to the ground-sharks at Antigua;—up they all come to see what's to be had. We shall have a dozen of them above the horizon before two hours are above our heads."

M'Elvina, who had his glass fixed upon the vessel, soon made her out to be a frigate, coming down under a press of sail, attracted, as Phillips had remarked, by the reports of the

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guns. What made the affair more serious was, that she was evidently bringing down a strong breeze, which the lugger, although steering large, had not yet obtained. Moreover, the fog had dispersed in all directions, and the frigate neared them fast.

"B——t the cutter!" said the first-mate; "we shall pay dearly for our lark."

"This is confoundedly unlucky," replied M'Elvina; "she brings the wind down with her, and won't part with a breath of it. However, 'faint heart never won fair lady.' Keep her away two points more. Clap everything on her. We'll weather her yet."

The breeze that ran along the water in advance of the frigate now began to be felt by the lugger, who again dashed the foaming water from her bows as she darted through the wave; but it was a point of sailing at which a frigate has always an advantage over a small vessel; and M'Elvina having gradually edged away, so as to bring the three masts of his pursuer apparently into one, perceived that the frigate was rapidly closing with him.

The crew of the lugger, who had been all merriment at the successful termination of the late combat (for not one man had been killed or severely wounded), now paced the deck, or looked over the bulwark with serious and foreboding aspects; the foreigners, particularly, began to curse their fate, and considered their voyage and anticipated profits at an end. M'Elvina, perceiving their discontent, ordered the men aft and addressed them:—

"My lads, I have often been in a worse scrape, and have weathered it; nor do I know but what we may yet manage to get out of this, if you will pay strict attention to my orders and behave in that cool and brave manner which I have reason to expect from you. Much, if not all, depends upon whether the captain of that frigate is a 'new hand' or not. If he is an old Channel-groper, we shall have some difficulty; but, however, we will try for it, and if we do not succeed, at least we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we did our best both for ourselves and our employers."

M'Elvina then proceeded to explain to his crew the manœuvre that he intended to practise to obtain the weather-gage of the frigate, upon which their only chance of escape would

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depend, and the men returned to their stations, if not contented, at least with increased confidence in their captain, and strong hopes of success.

As the day closed the frigate was within a mile of the lugger, and coming up with her hand over hand. The breeze was strong, and the water was no longer in ripples, but curled over in short waves to the influence of the blast. The frigate yawed a little; the smoke from her bow-chaser was followed by an instantaneous report, and the shot dashed into the water close under the stern of the lugger. "Sit down under the bulwarks; sit down, my lads, and keep all fast," said M'Elvina. "He'll soon be tired of that; he has lost more than a cable's-length already." M'Elvina was correct in his supposition; the commander of the frigate perceived that he had lost too much ground by deviating from his course, and the evening was closing in. He fired no more. Both vessels continued their course, the smuggler particularly attentive in keeping the three masts of her pursuer in one, to prevent her from firing into her, or to oblige her to drop astern if she did.

Half-an-hour more, and as the sun's lower limb touched the horizon the frigate was within musket-shot of the lugger, and the marines, who had been ordered forward, commenced a heavy fire upon her, to induce her to lower her sails and surrender; but in vain. By the directions of their captain, the men sheltered themselves under the bulwarks, and the vessel continued her course, with all her sails expanded to the breeze.

A few minutes more and she was right under the bows of the frigate, who now prepared to round-to and pour a broad-side into her for her temerity. M'Elvina watched their motions attentively, and as the frigate yawed-to with all her sails set, he gave the order to lower away; and the sails of the lugger were in an instant down on the deck, in token of submission.

"Helm hard a-lee, now; keep a little bit of the mizzen up, Phillips; they won't observe it."

"Marines, cease firing; hands, shorten sail and clear away the first cutter," were the orders given on board the frigate, and distinctly heard by the smugglers; but the heavy press of sail that the frigate was obliged to carry to come up with the chase was not so soon to be reduced as that of a small

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vessel; and as she rounded-to with studding-sails below and aloft, she shot past the lugger, and left her on her quarter.

"Now's your time, my men. Hoist away the jib-sheet to windward." The lugger payed off as the wind caught the sail. "All's right. Up with the lugs."

The order was obeyed as an order generally is by men working for their escape from what they most dreaded—poverty and imprisonment; and before the frigate could reduce her sails, which were more than she could carry on a wind, the lugger had shot away on her weather quarter, and was a quarter of a mile in advance. The frigate tacked after her, firing gun after gun, but without success. Fortune favoured M'Elvina; and the shades of night soon hid the lugger from the sight of her irritated and disappointed pursuers. A long career was before *La Belle Susanne*; she was not to be taken that time.

## CHAPTER XIV

A fisherman he had been in his youth;  
But other speculations were, in sooth,  
Added to his connection with the sea,  
Perhaps not so respectable, in truth.

He had an only daughter.

*Don Juan.*

NOT possessing a prompter's whistle, we must use, as a substitute, the boatswain's call, and at his shrill pipe we change the scene to a back-parlour in one of the most confined streets at the east end of England's proud and wealthy metropolis. The *dramatis personæ* are an elderly and corpulent personage, with as little of fashion in his appearance as in his residence, and a young female of about twenty years of age, with expressive and beautiful features, but wanting "the damask on the cheek," the true value of which the fair sex so well appreciate that, if not indebted for it to nature, they are too apt to resort to art for an unworthy imitation.

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The first-mentioned of these two personages was busy examining, through his spectacles, some papers which lay on the table before him, occasionally diverted from his task by the pertinacity of some flies, which seemed to have taken a particular fancy to his bald forehead and scalp, which, in spite of his constant brushing off, they thought proper to consider as a pleasant and smooth sort of coursing-plain, placed there (probably in their ideas) solely for their amusement. Part of a decanter of wine and the remains of a dessert crowded the small table at which he sat, and added to the general air of confinement which pervaded the whole.

"It's very hot, my dear. Open the window and let us have a little air."

"Oh, father!" replied the young woman, who rose to throw up the sash, "you don't know how I pine for fresh air. How long do you intend to continue this life of constant toil and privation?"

"How long, my dear? Why, I presume you do not wish to starve; you would not be very well pleased if, when you applied for money, as you do every week at least, I were to tell you that the bag was empty."

"Oh, nonsense; I know better, father. Don't think so poorly of me as to attempt to deceive me in that way."

"And pray, Miss Susan, what do you know?" said the old gentleman, looking up at her through his spectacles as she stood by the side of his chair.

"I know what you have taught me, sir. Do you recollect explaining to me the nature of the Funds, what was the meaning of the National Debt, all the varieties of stock, and what interest they all bore?"

"Well, and what then?"

"Why, then, father, I have often seen the amounts of the dividends which you have received every half-year, and have heard your orders to Wilmott to reinvest in the Funds. Now, your last half-year's dividend in the Three per Cents. was—let me see—oh—£841, 14s. 6d., which, you know, doubled, makes itself an income of——"

"And pray, Miss Susan, what business have you with all this?" retorted her father, half pleased, half angry.

"Why, father, you taught me yourself, and thought me very stupid because I did not comprehend it as soon as you



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expected," answered Susan, leaning over and kissing him; "and now you ask me what business I have to know it."

"Well, well, girl, it's very true," said the old man, smiling; "but allowing that you are correct, what then?"

"Why then, father, don't be angry if I say that it appears to me that you have more money now than you can spend while you live, or know to whom to leave it when you die. What, then, is the use of confining yourself in a dirty, narrow street, and toiling all day for no earthly advantage?"

"But how do you know that I have nobody to leave my money to, Susan?"

"Have you not repeatedly said that you have no relations or kin that you are aware of except me; that you were once a sailor before the mast—an orphan, bound apprentice by the parish? Whom, then, have you except me?—and if you continue here much longer, father, I feel convinced that you will not have me; you will have no one. If you knew how tired I am of looking out at this horrid brick wall; how I long for the country, to be running among the violets and primroses; how I pine for relief from this little dungeon. Oh! what would I give to be flying before the breeze in the lugger with M'Elvina!"

"Indeed, Miss!" replied old Hornblow, whom the reader may recognise as the patron of our smuggling captain.

"Well, father, there's no harm in saying so. I want freedom. I feel as if I could not be too free; I should like to be blown about in a balloon. Oh! why don't you give up business, go down to the seaside, take a pretty little cottage, and make yourself and me happy? I fancy the sea-breeze is blowing in my face and all my ringlets out of curl. I shall die if I stay here much longer; I shall indeed, father."

Repeated attacks of this nature had already sapped the foundation, and a lovely and only daughter had the influence over her father's heart to which she was entitled.

"Well, well, Susan, let M'Elvina wind up the accounts of this vessel, and then I will do as you wish; but I cannot turn him adrift, you know."

"Turn Captain M'Elvina adrift! No; if you did, father——"

"I presume that you would be very much inclined to take him in tow—eh, Miss?"

"I shall never act without attending to your advice and

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consulting your wishes, my dear father," answered Susan, the suffusion of her unusually pale cheeks proving that she required but colour to be perfectly beautiful.

And here the conversation dropped. Old Hornblow had long perceived the growing attachment between his daughter and M'Elvina, and the faithful and valuable services of the latter, added to the high opinion which the old man had of his honesty—which, to do M'Elvina justice, had been most scrupulous—had determined him to let things take their own course. Indeed, there was no one with whom old Hornblow was acquainted to whom he would have entrusted his daughter's happiness with so much confidence as to our reformed captain.

A sharp double tap at the street-door announced the post, and in a few minutes after this conversation the clerk appeared with a letter for old Hornblow, who, pursuant to the prudent custom of those days, had his counting-house on the ground-floor of his own residence, which enabled him to go to his dinner, and return to his business in the evening. Nowadays we are all above our business, and live above our means (which is in itself sufficient to account for the general distress that is complained of); and the counting-house is deserted before dusk, that we may arrive at our residences in Russell Square or the Regent's Park in time to dress for a turtle-dinner at six o'clock, instead of a mutton-chop or single joint, *en famille*, at two.

But to return. Old Hornblow put on his spectacles (which were on the table since they had been removed from his nose by Susan when she kissed him), and examined the post-mark, seal, and superscription, as if he wished to tax his ingenuity with a guess previously to opening the letter, which would have saved him all that trouble, and have decided the point of scrutiny, viz., from whom it came.

"M'Elvina, I rather think," said he, musing; "but the post-mark is Plymouth. How the deuce——" The two first lines of the letter were read, and the old man's countenance fell. Susan, who had been all alive at the mention of M'Elvina's name, perceived the alteration in her father's looks.

"No bad news, I hope, my dear father?"

"Bad enough," replied the old man, with a deep sigh; "the lugger is taken by a frigate, and sent into Plymouth."

"And Captain M'Elvina—he's not hurt, I hope?"

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"No, I presume not, as he has written the letter, and says nothing about it."

Satisfied upon this point, Susan, who recollected her father's promise, was undutiful enough, we are sorry to say, to allow her heart to bound with joy at the circumstance. All her fond hopes were about to be realised, and she could hardly refrain from carolling the words of Ariel, "Where the bee sucks, there lurk I;" but fortunately she remembered that other parties might not exactly participate in her delight. Out of respect for her father's feelings, she therefore put on a grave countenance, in sad contrast with her eyes, which joy had brilliantly lighted up.

"Well, it's a bad business," continued old Hornblow. "Wilmott!" (The clerk heard his master's voice, and came in.) "Bring me the ledger. Let me see—*Belle Susanne*. I wonder why the fool called her by that name, as if I had not one already to take money out of my pocket. Oh! here it is—folio 59 continued; folio 100, 129, 147—not balanced since April last year. Be quick, and strike me out a rough balance-sheet of the lugger."

"But what does Captain McElvina say, father?"

"What does he say? Why, that he is taken. Haven't I told you so already, girl?" replied old Hornblow, in evident ill-humour.

"Yes, but the particulars, my dear father!"

"Oh, there's only the fact, without particulars—says he will write more fully in a day or two."

"I'll answer for him that it was not his fault, father; he has always done you justice."

"I did not say that he had not; I'm only afraid that success has made him careless—it's always the case."

"Yes," replied Susan, taking up the right cue, "as you say, father, he has been very successful."

"He has," replied the old man, recovering his serenity a little, "very successful indeed. I dare say it was not his fault."

The clerk soon made his appearance with the rough balance-sheet required. It did more to restore the good-humour of the old man than even the soothing of his daughter.

"Oh! here we are—*La Belle Susanne*—Dr. to ——. Total, £14,864, 14s. 3d. Contra—Cr. £27,986, 16s. 8d. Balance to profit and loss, £13,122, 2s. 5d. Well, that's not

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so very bad in less than three years. I think I may afford to lose her."

"Why, father," replied Susan, leaning over his shoulder and looking archly at him, "'tis a fortune in itself, to a contented person."

But as, independently of M'Elvina's letter not being sufficiently explicit, there are other circumstances connected with his capture that are important to our history, we shall ourselves narrate the particulars.

For more than two years M'Elvina, by his dexterity and courage, and the fast sailing of his vessel, had escaped all his pursuers and regularly landed his cargoes. During this time Willy had made rapid progress under his instruction, not only in his general education, but also in that of his profession. One morning the lugger was off Cape Clear, on the coast of Ireland, when she discovered a frigate to windward, the wind, weather, and relative situations of the two vessels being much the same as on the former occasion when M'Elvina, by his daring and judicious manœuvre, had effected his escape. The frigate chased, and soon closed-to within a quarter of a mile of the lugger, when she rounded-to and poured in a broadside of grape, which brought her fore-yard down on deck. From that moment such an incessant fire of musketry was poured in from the frigate that every man on board of M'Elvina's vessel who endeavoured to repair the mischief was immediately struck down. Any attempt at escape was now hopeless. When within two cables' length, the frigate hove to the wind, keeping the lugger under her lee, and continued a fire of grape and musketry into her until the rest of her sails were lowered down.

The crew of the smuggler, perceiving all chance in their favour to be over, ran down below to avoid the fire and secure their own effects. The boats of the frigate were soon on board of the lugger, and despatched back to her with M'Elvina and the chief officers. Willy jumped into the boat and was taken on board with his patron.

The captain of the frigate was on the quarter-deck; and as he turned round, it occurred to Willy that he had seen his face before, but when or where he could not exactly call to mind; and he continued to scrutinise him as he paced up and down the quarter-deck, revolving in his

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mind where it was that he had encountered that peculiar countenance.

His eye, so fixed upon the captain that it followed him up and down as he moved, at last was met by that of the latter, who, surprised at finding so small a lad among the prisoners, walked over to the lee-side of the quarter-deck and addressed him with—"You're but a young smuggler, my lad; are you the captain's son?"

The voice immediately recalled to Willy's recollection every circumstance attending their last meeting, and who the captain was. He answered in the negative with a smile.

"You've a light heart, youngster. Pray, what's your name?"

"You said that my name was to be Seymour, sir," replied Willy, touching his hat.

"Said his name was to be Seymour! What does the boy mean? Good heavens! I recollect," observed Captain M——, for it was he. "Are you the boy that I sent home in the *chasse-marée*, to be fitted out for the quarter-deck?"

"Yes, sir."

"And how long have you been on this praiseworthy service?"

"Ever since, sir," replied our hero, who had little idea of its impropriety.

*La Belle Susanne* was as renowned for her fast sailing and repeated escapes from the cruisers as Captain M'Elvina and his crew were for their courage and success. The capture of the vessel had long been a desideratum of the English Government; and Captain M——, although gratified at her falling into his hands, was not very well pleased to find that a lad whom he had intended to bring forward in the service should, as he supposed, have voluntarily joined a party who had so long bid defiance to the laws and naval force of the country. His countenance assumed an air of displeasure, and he was about to turn away without any further remarks, when M'Elvina, who perceived how matters stood, and felt aware that Willy's future prospects were at stake, stepped forward, and respectfully addressing the captain, narrated in few words the rescue of Willy from the wreck, and added that the boy had been detained by him, and had had no opportunity of leaving the vessel, which had never anchored

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but in the French port of Havre. He also stated, what was indeed true, that he had always evaded explaining to the boy the real nature of the service upon which the lugger was employed; from which it may be inferred that, notwithstanding M'Elvina's defence of smuggling in a former chapter, he was not quite so well convinced in his own mind of its propriety as he would have induced Debriseau to suppose.

The assertions of M'Elvina turned the scale again in Willy's favour; and after he had answered the interrogatories of the captain relative to the fate of Mr. Bullock and the rest of the men in the prize, Captain M——, who, although severe, was not only just but kind-hearted, determined that his former good intentions relative to our hero should still remain in force.

"Well, Mr. Seymour, you have seen a little service, and your captain gives you a high character as an active and clever lad. As you have been detained against your will, I think we may recover your time and pay. I trust, however, that you will in future be employed in a more honourable manner. We shall, in all probability, be soon in port, and till then you must remain as you are, for I cannot trust you again in a prize."

As our hero was in a new ship, the officers and ship's company of which were not acquainted with his history, except that he had been promoted for an act of gallantry by Captain M——, he was favourably received by his messmates. The crew of the lugger were detained as prisoners on board of the frigate, and the vessel, in charge of one of the officers, was ordered to keep company, Captain M—— having determined to return into port, and not wishing to lose sight of his valuable prize.

"You have a very fine ship's company, Captain M'Elvina," observed Captain M——. "How many of them are English?"

"About eighty; and as good seamen as ever walked a plank."

Captain M—— ordered the crew of the lugger aft of the quarter-deck, and put the question to them whether they would not prefer entering his Majesty's service to the confinement of a prison; but at the moment they felt too indignant at having been captured by the frigate to listen to the proposal, and refused to a man. Captain M—— turned away disap-



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pointed, surveying the fine body of men with a covetous eye as they were ranged in a line on his quarter-deck. He felt what a prize they would be to him, if he could have added them to his own ship's company; for at that time it was almost impossible to man the number of ships which were employed in an effective manner.

"Will you allow me to try what I can do for you, sir?" said M'Elvina, as the men disappeared from the quarter-deck to their former station as prisoners. Having received the nod of assent on the part of Captain M——, M'Elvina went down to the men, who gathered round him. He forcibly pointed out to them the advantages of the proposal, and the good chance they had of enriching themselves by the prize-money they would make in a frigate which could capture such a fast-sailing vessel as the lugger. He also dwelt upon the misery of the prison which awaited them; but what decided them was the observation that, in all probability, they would not be permitted (now that seamen were in such request) to remain in prison, but would be drafted in several ships, and be separated, whereas by now entering for Captain M—— they would all remain shipmates as before.

Having obtained their unanimous consent, M'Elvina, with a pleased countenance, came aft, followed by his men, and informed Captain M—— that they had agreed to enter for his ship. "Allow me to congratulate you, sir, on your good fortune, as you will yourself acknowledge it to be when you find out what an addition they will be to your ship's company."

"I am indebted to you for your interference, sir," replied Captain M——, "and shall not prove ungrateful. Your conduct in this affair makes me inclined to ask another favour. I believe you can give me some valuable information, if you choose. Whether you are inclined to do so I am not yet sure, but I now think that you will."

"You will find me an Englishman, body and soul, sir; and although I have, in defence of my profession, been occasionally necessitated to choose between capture and resistance, I can most conscientiously say that every shot I have fired against my own countrymen has smitten me to the heart" (and this assertion was true, although we have no time to analyse M'Elvina's feelings at present). "I am not bound by honour, nor have I the least inclination, to conceal any information I

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may have obtained when in the French ports. I went there to serve my purposes, and they allowed me to do so to serve their own. I never would (although repeatedly offered bribes) bring them any information relative to the proceedings of our own country, and I shall most cheerfully answer your questions; indeed, I have information which I would have given you before now, had I not felt that it might be supposed I was actuated more by a view of serving myself than my country. I only wish, Captain M——, that you may fall in with a French frigate before I leave your ship, that I may prove to you that I can fight as well for old England as I have done in defence of property entrusted to my charge."

"Then do me the favour to step down into the cabin," said Captain M——.

Captain M—— and M'Elvina were shut up in the after-cabin for some time, and the information received by Captain M—— was so important that he determined not to anchor. He put all the French prisoners on board of the lugger at the entrance of the Sound, and sending in a boat to take out the major part of the men who had charge of her, he retained M'Elvina on board of the frigate, and made all sail for the French coast.

## CHAPTER XV

That which should accompany old age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have.

SHAKSPEARE.

**BUT** we must return on shore, that we may not lose sight of the grandfather of our hero, who had no idea that there was a being in existence who was so nearly connected with him.

The time had come when that information was to be given; for, about six weeks previous to the action we have described in which Adams, the quarter-master, was killed, Admiral De Courcy was attacked by a painful and mortal disease. As long as he was able to move about, his irritability of temper, increased by suffering, rendered him more insupportable than

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ever ; but he was soon confined to his room, and the progress of the disease became so rapid that the medical attendants considered it their duty to apprise him that all hopes of recovery must now be abandoned, and that he must prepare himself for the worst.

The admiral received the intelligence with apparent composure, and bowed his head to the physicians as they quitted his room. He was alone, and left to his own reflections, which were not of the most enviable nature. He was seated, propped up in an easy-chair, opposite the large French window, which commanded a view of the park. The sun was setting, and the long-extended shadows of the magnificent trees which adorned his extensive domain were in beautiful contrast with the gleams of radiant light, darting in long streaks between them on the luxuriant herbage. The cattle, quietly standing in the lake, were refreshing themselves after the heat of the day, and the deer lay in groups under the shade or crouching in their lairs, partly concealed by the underwood and fern. All was in repose and beauty, and the dying man watched the sun, as it fast descended to the horizon, as emblematical of his race, so shortly to be sped. He surveyed the groups before him ; he envied even the beasts of the field and the reclaimed tenants of the forest, for they at least had of their kind, with whom they could associate ; but he, their lord and master, was alone—alone in the world, without one who loved or cared for him ; without one to sympathise in his sufferings and administer to his wants, except from interested motives ; without one to soothe his anguish and soften the pillow of affliction and disease ; without one to close his eyes or shed a tear now that he was dying.

His thoughts naturally reverted to his wife and children. He knew that two of these individuals, out of three, were in the cold grave—and where was the other ? The certain approach of death had already humanised and softened his flinty heart. The veil that had been drawn by passion between his conscience and his guilt was torn away. The past rushed upon his memory with dreadful rapidity and truth, and horrible conviction flashed upon his soul, as he unwillingly acknowledged himself to be the murderer of his wife and child. Remorse, as usual, followed, treading upon the heels

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of conviction—such remorse that, in a short space, the agony became insupportable.

After an ineffectual struggle of pride, he seized the line which was attached to the bell-rope, and when his summons was obeyed, desired that the vicar might be immediately requested to come to him.

Acquainted with the admiral's situation, the vicar had anxiously waited the summons which he was but too well aware would come, for he knew the human heart, and the cry for aid which the sinner in his fear sends forth. He was soon in the presence of the admiral, for the first time since the day that he quitted the house with the letter of the unfortunate Peters in his possession. The conversation which ensued between the agitated man, who had existed only for this world, and the placid teacher, who had considered it (as he inculcated) as only a preparation for a better, was too long to be here inserted. It will be sufficient to say that the humbled and terrified wretch, the sufferer from disease, and greater sufferer from remorse, never could have been identified with the once proud and overbearing mortal who had so long spurned at the precepts of religion and turned a deaf ear to the mild persuasions of its apostle.

"But that letter!" continued the admiral in a faltering voice—"what was it? I have yet one child alive. Oh! send immediately for him, and let me implore his forgiveness for my cruelty."

"That letter, sir, was written but one hour previously to his death."

"His death!" cried the admiral, turning his eyes up to the ceiling. "God have mercy on me! then I have murdered him also. And how did he die? Did he starve, as I expressed in my horrid, horrid wish?"

"No, sir; his life was forfeited to the offended laws of his country."

"Good God, sir!" hastily replied the admiral, whose ruling passion—pride—returned for the moment, "you do not mean to say that he was hanged?"

"Even so; but there is the letter which he wrote—read it."

The admiral seized the letter in his tremulous hand, and devoured every word as he perused it. He let it fall on his knees, and said in a subdued voice, "My God! my God!"

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and he asked forgiveness, and forgives me !” Then, with frantic exclamation, he continued. “Wretch that I am ; would that I had died for thee, my son, my son !” and clasping his hands over his head, he fell back in a state of insensibility.

The vicar, much affected with the scene, rang the bell for assistance, which was obtained ; but the wretched man had received a shock which hastened his dissolution. He was too much exhausted to sit upright, and they were obliged to carry him to the bed from which he never rose again. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered to be able to converse, he waved the servants from the room, and resumed in a faltering voice—

“But, sir, he mentions his child—*my grandchild*. Where is he ? Can I see him ?”

“I am afraid not, sir,” replied the vicar, who then entered into a recital of the arrangements which had taken place, and the name of the ship on board of which our hero had been permitted to remain, under the charge of Adams, the quarter-master.

The admiral listened to the recital of the vicar without interruption, and as soon as it was finished, to the great joy of the worthy pastor, expressed the most anxious wish to make every reparation in his power. Aware that difficulties might arise from the circumstance of our hero’s existence not being suspected by his collateral heirs, who had for some time considered as certain their ultimate possession of his large entailed property, he directed a will to be immediately drawn up, acknowledging his grandchild, and leaving to him all his personal property, which was very considerable ; and praying the vicar to take upon himself the office of guardian to the boy—a request which was cheerfully complied with. The admiral would not listen to the repeated requests of the vicar to take the repose which his excited and sinking frame required until the necessary document had been drawn out, signed, and duly witnessed. When all was complete he fell back on the pillow, in such a state of exhaustion as threatened immediately to terminate his career. It was late when the vicar took his leave, after having administered some little consolation to the repentant and dying man, and promised to call upon him early on the ensuing morning.

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But the vicar had other duties to perform, which induced him to defer his visit until the following noon. Others were sick, others were dying, and needed spiritual consolation; and he made no distinction between the rich and the poor. The physicians had expressed their opinion that the admiral might linger for many days, and the vicar thought that advantage might be derived from his being left for a short time to his own reflections, and to recover from the state of exhaustion arising from the communications of the preceding evening. When he arrived at the hall the windows were closed—Admiral De Courcy was no more.

Reader, you shall hear how he died. It was about two o'clock in the morning that he awoke from an uneasy slumber, and felt his end approaching. The old crone who had been hired as a nurse to watch at night was fast asleep in her chair. The rushlight had burned low down in the socket, and, through the interstices of its pierced shade, threw a feeble and alternate light and shadow over the room. The mouth of the dying man was glued together from internal heat, and he suffered from agonising thirst. He murmured for relief, but no one answered. Again and again he attempted to make his careless attendant acquainted with his wants, but in vain. He stretched out his arm and moved the curtains of the bed, that the noise of the curtain-rings upon the iron rods might have the effect, and then fell back with exhaustion, arising from the effort which he had made.

The old beldame, who for money was willing to undertake the most revolting offices, and who, without remuneration, was so hardened, by her constant familiarity with disease and death, that she was callous and insensible to the most earnest supplication, woke up at the noise which the curtain-rings had made, and opened the curtain to ascertain what was required. Long experience told her at once that all would soon be over, and she was convinced that her charge would never rise or speak again.

This was true; but the suffering man (his arm lying outside of the bedclothes and his elbow bent upwards) still pointed with his finger to his parched mouth, with a look of entreaty from his sinking eyes. The old fiend shut the curtains, and the admiral waited with impatience for them to reopen with the drop of water "to cool his parched tongue," but in vain.



## THE KING'S OWN

Leaving him to his fate, she hobbled about the room to secure a golden harvest, before others should make their appearance and share it with her. His purse was on the table; she removed the gold which it contained, and left the silver; she chose that which she imagined to be the most valuable of the three rings on the dressing-table; she detached one seal from the chain of his watch. She then repaired to the wardrobe and examined its contents. One of her capacious pockets was soon filled with the finest cambric handkerchiefs, all of which she first took the precaution to open and hold up to the light, rejecting those which were not of the finest texture. The silk stockings were the next articles that were coveted; they were unfolded one by one, and her skinny arm passed up, that the feet might be extended by her shrivelled hands, to ascertain whether they were darned or not; if so, they were rejected.

The wardrobe was on the opposite side of the bed, and on that side the curtains had not been closed. The dying man had still enough sight left to perceive the employment of his attendant. What must have been his feelings! He uttered a deep groan, which startled the old hag, and she repaired to the bedside to examine the state of her charge.

Again he pointed with his finger to his mouth, and again she returned to her employment, without having rendered the assistance which he required. His eyes followed and his finger still pointed. Having ransacked every drawer and secured all that she dared take, or that her pockets could contain, she rang the bell for the servants of the house; then pulling out her handkerchief, ready to put to her eyes in token of sympathy, she sat down on her easy-chair to await their coming.

In the meanwhile the eyes of the unfortunate man gradually turned upward; his vision was gone, but his agonising thirst continued to the last; and when the retainers of the family came in he was found dead, with his finger still pointing in the same direction.

With ordinary minds, there is something so terrible in death, something so awful in the dissolution of the elements of our frame, something so horrible in the leap into the dark abyss, that it requires all the powers of a fortified spirit, all the encouragement of a good conscience, and all the consolations of religion and of faith to enable us to muster any degree of resolution for the awful change. But if aught can smoothen

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the pillow, can chase away from the terrified spirit the doubt and depression by which it is overwhelmed, it is the being surrounded and attended by those who are devoted and endeared to us. When love and duty, and charity and sympathy hover round the couch of the departing, fainting hope is supported by their presence, and the fleeting spirit, directed by them, looks upward to the realms from which these heaven-born passions have been permitted to descend on earth, to cheer us through our weary pilgrimage.

What, then, had Admiral De Courcy to support him in his last moments? A good conscience?—faith?—hope?—love?—duty?—or even sympathy? Wanting all, he breathed his last. But let us

Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all;  
Close up his eyes, and draw the curtains close,  
And let us all to meditation.

The vicar affixed seals upon the drawers, to secure the remainder of the property (for the example of the old nurse had been followed by many others), and having given directions for the funeral, returned to his own home.

The second day after the admiral's death, a carriage and four drove furiously up the avenue and stopped at the entrance door. The occupants descended, and rang the bells with an air of authority; the summons was answered by several of the male domestics, who were anxiously looking out for the new proprietor of the domain. A tall man, of very gentleman-like appearance, followed by a mean-looking personage in black, walked in, the latter, as he followed, proclaiming the other to the servants as the heir-at-law and present owner of the property. By this time the whole household were assembled, lining the hall for the visitors to pass, and bowing and curtsying to the ground. The vicar, who had expected the appearance of these parties, had left directions that he might be immediately acquainted with their arrival. On receipt of the information, he proceeded to the hall, and was ushered into the library, where he found them anxiously awaiting his arrival, that the seals might be withdrawn which had been placed upon the drawers.

"Whom have I the honour of addressing, sir?" said the

## THE KING'S OWN

vicar to the taller of the two, whom he presumed, by his appearance, to be the superior.

"Sir," replied the little man in a pompous manner, "you are speaking to Mr. Rainscourt, the heir-at-law of this entailed property."

"I am sorry, truly sorry, sir," replied the vicar, "that from not having been well informed, you should be subjected to such severe disappointment. I am afraid, sir, that the grandchild of Admiral De Courcy will have a prior claim."

The two parties started from their chairs and looked at each other in amazement.

"The grandchild!" replied the little man; "never even heard that there was such a person."

"Very probably, sir; but I have long known it, and so did Admiral De Courcy, as you will perceive when you read his will, which is in my possession, as guardian to the child, and upon the strength of which office I have put seals upon the property."

The parties looked aghast.

"We must inquire into this," replied the legal adviser, for such he was.

"I am ready to give you any information you may require," replied the vicar. "I have here copies of the marriage certificate of the parents and the register of baptism of the child, the originals of which you will find in the parish church of —, not five miles distant; and I can most satisfactorily prove his identity, should that be necessary."

"And where is the grandchild?"

"At sea, on board a man-of-war, at the dying request of his father, who determined that he should be brought up for the service. Would you like to see the late admiral's will?"

The tall gentleman bowed assent, and it was read. Having been carefully examined by the lawyer, as well as the other documents in the vicar's possession, all appeared so clear and conclusive that he unwillingly acknowledged to his employer, in a whisper, that there was no chance of setting the will aside. Pallid with the revulsion of feelings from hope to despair, the pretender to the estates ordered the horses to be brought out, and on their being announced, with a slight bow to the vicar, retired from the library.

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But outside, the state of affairs was altered by the servants having overheard the conversation. No one was attentive enough to open the door to let out those whom they had so obsequiously admitted, and one of the postillions was obliged to dismount to shut up the chaise after they had entered it. Such is the deference shown respectively to those who are, or are not, the real heirs-at-law.

### CHAPTER XVI

On deck five hundred men did dance,  
'The stoutest they could find in France.  
We with two hundred did advance,  
On board of the *Arethusa*.  
Our captain hailed the Frenchman "Ho!"  
The Frenchman then cried out "Hallo!"  
"Bear down, d'ye see,  
To our admiral's lee;"  
"No, no," says the Frenchman, "that can't be;"  
"Then I must lug you along with me,"  
Says the saucy *Arethusa*.

*Sea Song.*

THE information received from M'Elvina, which induced Captain M—— not to anchor, was relative to a French frigate of the largest class, that he had great hopes of falling in with. She was lying in the harbour of Brest, waiting for a detachment of troops which had been ordered to embark, when she was to sail for Rochefort, to join a squadron intended to make a descent upon some of our colonies. Previously to M'Elvina's sailing from the port of Havre, the prefect of that arrondissement had issued directions for certain detachments to march on a stated day to complete the number of troops ordered on board.

M'Elvina had sure data from which to calculate as to the exact period of embarkation, and was also aware that the frigate had orders to sail to the port of rendezvous the first favourable wind after the embarkation had taken place. In two days the *Aspasia*, for that was the name of the frigate commanded by

## THE KING'S OWN

Captain M——, was off Ushant, and the captain, taking the precaution to keep well off the land during the daytime, only running in to make the lights after dark, retained his position off that island until the wind shifted to the northward. He then shaped a course so as to fall in with the French coast, about thirty miles to the southward of the harbour of Brest. It was still dark when Captain M——, having run his distance, shortened sail and hove-to in the cruising ground which M'Elvina had recommended; and so correct was the calculation, as well as the information, of the captain of the smugglers, that at daybreak, as the frigate lay with her head in-shore, with the wind at N.N.W., a large vessel was descried under the land, a little on her weather-bow. After severely scrutinising the stranger for some minutes with his glass, which he now handed to M'Elvina—

“That's she, indeed, I believe,” said Captain M——.

“A large frigate, with studding-sails set, standing across our bows,” cried out the first lieutenant from the mast-head.

“She'll try for the Passage du Raz; we must cut her off, if we can. Hands, make sail.”

The hands were summoned up by the shrill pipe of the boatswain and his mates; but it was quite unnecessary, as the men had already crowded on deck upon the first report which had been communicated below, and were in clusters on the forecastle and gangways.

“Topmen, aloft! loose top-gallant sails and royals; clear away the flying-jib,” were orders that were hardly out of the mouth of the first lieutenant, breathless with his rapid descent from aloft, when the gaskets were off and the sails hung fluttering from the yards. In another minute the sheets were home, the sails hoisted and trimmed, and the *Aspasia* darted through the yielding waves, as if the eagerness of pursuit which quickened the pulses of her crew had been communicated from them like an electric shock to her own frame, and she were conscious that her country demanded her best exertions.

“Pipe the hammocks up, Mr. Hardy,” said Captain M—— to the first lieutenant; “when they are stowed, we will beat to quarters.”

“Ay, ay, sir. Shall we order the fire out in the galley?”

“When the cocoa is ready, not before; there will be plenty

## THE KING'S OWN

of time for the people to get their breakfast. How does the land bear, Mr. Pearce?"

"Saint Island about S.E. by S., eight or nine miles, sir," replied the master.

"If so, I think we shall cut him off, and then 'fight he must.'"

Both frigates had hoisted their colours in defiance, and as they were steering for the same point, they neared each other fast; the French vessel, with his starboard studding-sails, running for the entrance of the narrow passage, which he hoped to gain, and the *Aspasia* close-hauled to intercept him, and at the same time to avoid the dangerous rocks to leeward, far extending from Saint Island, whose name they bore.

"Have the men had their breakfast, Mr Hardy?" said the captain.

"The cocoa was in the tub, sir," answered the first lieutenant, "ready for serving out, but they started it all in the lee-scutters. They wanted the tub to fill it with shot."

Captain M—— smiled at the enthusiasm of his crew, but the smile was suddenly checked as he reflected that probably many of the fine fellows would never breakfast again.

"If not contrary to your regulations, Captain M——," said M'Elvina, "as the crew of the *Susanne* have not yet been incorporated with your ship's company, may I request that they may be stationed together, and that I may be permitted to be with them?"

"Your suggestion is good," replied the captain, "and I am obliged to you for the offer. They shall assist to work the quarter-deck carronades, and act as boarders and sail-trimmers. Mr. Hardy, let the new men be provided with cutlasses, and fill up any vacancies in the main-deck quarters from some of our own men who are at present stationed at the quarter-deck guns."

The frigates were now within gunshot of each other, and it was impossible to say which vessel would first attain the desired goal. The foremost guns of the respective ships, which had been trained forward, were reported to bear upon the enemy, and both commanders were aware that "knocking away a stick"—i.e., the shots striking the masts or yards of



## THE KING'S OWN

her opponent, so as to occasion them to fall—would decide the point. At the very time that Captain M—— was giving directions to fire the main-deck guns as they would bear, the first shot from his antagonist whizzed over his head, and the action commenced, each party attempting to cripple his opponent by firing high at his masts and rigging. The frigates continued to engage, until they had closed to within half a mile of each other, when the main-topmast of the Frenchman fell over the side.

This decided the point as to his escape through the passage, which he had made his utmost exertions to effect, in pursuance of the peremptory orders which he had received. He now hauled his wind on the same tack as the *Aspasia*, pouring in his starboard broadside as he rounded-to. The manœuvre was good, as he thereby retained his weather-gage, and the wreck of his topmast having fallen over his larboard side, he had his starboard broadside, which was all clear, and directed towards his opponent. Moreover, he forced the *Aspasia* to follow him into the bay formed between the Bec du Raz and the Bec du Chere, where she would in all probability receive considerable damage from the batteries which lined the coast.

Captain M—— was aware of all this; but his only fear was that his enemy should run on shore, and prevent his carrying him into port. The *Aspasia* was soon abreast of her opponent, and their broadsides were exchanged, when Captain M——, who wished to bring the action to a speedy conclusion, shot his vessel ahead, which he was enabled to do, from his superiority of sailing, after the main-topmast of the French frigate had been shot away. It was his intention not to have tacked until he could have fetched his antagonist, but the galling fire of the batteries, which now hulled him every time, induced him to go about, and as he was in stays, a raking shot entered the cabin windows, and in its passage along the main-deck added ten men to his list of killed and wounded.

Again the frigates, on the opposite tacks, poured in their broadsides; the fore-yard of the Frenchman was divided in the slings, and fell, hanging by the topsail sheets and lifts and tearing the sails, which fell over the fore-castle guns, and caught fire as they were discharged at the same moment.

## THE KING'S OWN

Nor did the *Aspasia* suffer less, for her mizzen-topmast was shot through, and her starboard anchor, cut from her bows, fell under her bottom and tore away the cable (a short range of which Captain M—— had had the precaution to have on deck, as they fought so close in-shore). This threw the men at the guns into confusion, and brought the ship up in the wind. The cable was at last separated, and flew out of the hawse-hole after the anchor, which plunged to the bottom; but this was not effected until, like an enormous serpent, it had enfolded in its embraces three or four hapless men, who were carried with dreadful velocity to the hawse-hole, where their crushed bodies for a time stopped it from running out, and gave their shipmates an opportunity of dividing it with their axes.

Order was eventually restored, and the *Aspasia*, who had been raked by her active opponent during the time that she was thrown up in the wind, continued her course, and as she passed the stern of the French frigate, luffed up and returned the compliment. The latter, anxious in his crippled state for the support of the batteries, which had already seriously injured his opponent, continued to forge in-shore.

"We shall weather her now; 'bout ship, Mr. Pearce. Recollect, my lads," said Captain M——, when the ship was about, "you'll reserve your fire till we touch her sides; then all hands to board."

The *Aspasia* ranged up on the weather quarter of her antagonist, Pearce, the master, conning her by the captain's directions, so that the fore-chains of the French vessel should be hooked by the spare anchor of the *Aspasia*. The enemy, who, in his disabled state, was not in a situation to choose whether he would be boarded or not, poured in a double-shotted and destructive broadside; and it was well for Captain M—— that his ship's company had received the reinforcement which they had from the *Susanne*, for the French frigate was crowded with men, and being now within pistol-shot, the troops, who were so thick on deck as to impede the motions of each other, kept up an incessant fire of musketry, cutting the *Aspasia's* running rigging, riddling her sails, and disabling her men.

"Hard a-port now!" cried Pearce, and the vessels came in collision, the spare anchor in the *Aspasia's* fore-chains catching

## THE KING'S OWN

and tearing away the backstays and lanyards of the enemy's fore-rigging, and with a violent jerk bringing down the fore-topmast to windward. At this moment the reserved broadside of the *Aspasia* was discharged, and the two frigates heeled over opposite ways from the violent concussion of the air in the confined space between them. While yet enveloped in the smoke the men flew up on deck, as they had been previously directed by Captain M——, who leaped upon the quarter-deck hammocks of his own frigate, and holding with one hand by the mizzen-topmast backstay, with his sword in the other, waving to encourage his men, waited a second or two for the closing of the after-parts of the vessels before he led on his boarders.

The smoke rolled away through the masts of the French frigate, and discovered her captain, with equal disregard to his safety, in nearly a similar position on the hammock rails of his own vessel. The rival commanders were not six feet apart when the main-chains of the two vessels crashed as they came in collision. The French captain drew a pistol from his belt and levelled it at Captain M——, whose fate appeared to be certain; when at the critical moment a hat, thrown from the quarter-deck of the *Aspasia* right into the face of the Frenchman, blinded him for a moment, and his pistol went off without taking effect.

"Capital shot that, Willy!" cried M'Elvina, as he sprang from the hammocks with his sword, "giving point" in advance, and while still darting through the air with the impetus of his spring, passing it through the body of the French captain, who fell back on his own quarter-deck, while M'Elvina, fortunately for himself, dropped into the chains, for, had he a hundred lives, they would have fallen a sacrifice to the exasperated Frenchmen. But the smugglers had followed M'Elvina; and Captain M——, with the rest of his ship's company, were thronging like bees in the rigging, hammocks, and chains of their opponent. From the destructive fire of the French troops many an English seaman fell dead, or, severely wounded, was reserved for a worse fate—that of falling overboard between the ships, and at the heave of the sea being crushed between their sides. Many a gallant spirit was separated from its body by this horrid death as the strife continued.



M'Elvina kills the French Captain.



## THE KING'S OWN

Possession was at length gained of the quarter-deck, but the carnage was not to cease. The French troops, stationed in the boats on the booms, formed a sort of pyramid, vomiting incessant fire; and the commandant had had the sagacity to draw up three lines of his men, with their bayonets fixed, from one side of the vessel to the other, abreast of the gangways, forming a barrier, behind which the crew of the French frigate had retreated, and which was impenetrable to the gallant crew of the *Aspasia*, who were only provided with short cutlasses.

Captain M——, as he saw his men falling on every side, and every attempt to force a passage unsuccessful, although accompanied with heavy loss of lives, found himself, as it were, in a trap. To force his way through appeared impossible; to retreat was against his nature. M'Elvina, who had been fighting by his side, perceived the awkward and dangerous predicament they were in, and his ready talent suggested a remedy. Calling out loudly, "Susannes! away there—follow me!" an order instantly obeyed by his men, he disappeared with them over the hainmacks, leaping back upon the quarter-deck of the *Aspasia*.

"Curses on the smuggler, he has run for it. At them again, my Britons, never mind," cried the first lieutenant, leading on the men against the phalanx of bayonets. But it was not as the first lieutenant had supposed, for before the cutlasses of the seamen had time again to strike fire upon the steel points which opposed their passage, M'Elvina reappeared in the fore-rigging of the French vessel, followed by his smugglers, who attacked the French troops in the rear, with a loud yell and an impetuosity that was irresistible. The diversion was announced by a cheer from Captain M—— and his party abaft, who, rushing upon the bayonets of the Frenchmen, already in confusion from the attack of M'Elvina, forced them down on the main-deck, and in a few minutes the hatches were secured over the remainder of the crew, and the tricoloured ensign disappeared from the gaff, and announced to the spectators in the batteries on shore that "*Britannia ruled the waves.*"



# THE KING'S OWN

## CHAPTER XVII

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride  
Once so faithful and so true,  
On the deck of fame that died  
With the gallant, good Riou,—  
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave !  
While the billow mournful rolls,  
And the mermaid's song condole,  
Singing glory to the souls  
Of the brave !

CAMPBELL.

HASTY congratulations between the survivors of the victorious party were exchanged as they proceeded to obey the orders which were issued by Captain M——, who directed their attention to the relief of the wounded, lying in heaps upon the deck, in many instances nearly smothered with the dead bodies which had fallen upon them, and which their own exhausted powers would not permit them to remove. The task of separation of those who were past all mortal aid from those who might still derive benefit from surgical assistance was as tedious as it was afflicting. No distinction was made between the rival sufferers, but as they came to hand, English or French, they were carefully conveyed to the half-decks of the respective ships, the surgeons of which were in readiness to receive them, their shirt-sleeves turned up to the elbows and hands and arms stained with blood, proving that they had already been actively employed in the duties of their profession.

On the foremost part of the larboard side of the French frigate's quarter-deck, where Captain M—— and his crew had boarded, the dead and dying lay in a heap, the summit of which was level with the tops of the carronades that they were between, and an occasional low groan from under the mass intimated that some were there who were dying more from the pressure of the other bodies than from the extent of their own wounds.

Captain M——, although he had lost much blood and was still bleeding profusely, would not leave the deck until he had collected a party to separate the pile, and many were relieved who in a few minutes more would have been suffocated.

## THE KING'S OWN

At the bottom of the heap was the body of the gallant French captain ; and Captain M—— was giving directions to the first lieutenant to have it carried below, when Willy, who was earnestly looking about the deck, brushed up against the latter, who said to him—

“Come, youngster, out of the way ; you’re no use here.”

“Has any one seen my hat ?” interrogated the boy as he obeyed the order and removed to a short distance.

“Here it is, my bantam,” said one of the boatswain’s mates, who had discovered it as they removed the body of the French captain, under which it had lain, jammed as flat as a pancake.

“Then it was to you that I was indebted for that well-timed assistance,” said Captain M——, taking the hat from the boatswain’s mate, and restoring it as well as he could to its former shape before he put it on Willy’s head

Willy looked up in the captain’s face and smiled assent as he walked away.

“A good turn is never lost,” observed Captain M—— ; “and the old fable of the mouse and the lion is constantly recurring to make us humble. If I had not put that boy on the quarter-deck, I should in all probability have made a vacancy. It was remarkable presence of mind on his part.”

We have not broken in upon our narrative to state that during the scene we have described, Mr. Pearce, the master, had succeeded in putting both vessels before the wind, although they still were hugged in each other’s embraces, as if they had always been the best friends in the world, and they were now out of the reach of the enemy’s batteries, which (as soon as they perceived the unfavourable results of the action) had commenced firing with red-hot balls, emblematical of their wrath.

When the wounded had been carried below and placed in comparative comfort on board of their respective ships the dead bodies were next examined. Those of the French (with the exception of that of the captain) were launched overboard, while those of the English were carried to their own frigate, the only instance in which any difference was shown between the rival sufferers. The hatches were then removed, and the French officers, having delivered up their swords, were permitted to remain on deck upon parole, while the men were secured down below in the fore and main holds of the *Aspasia*.

## THE KING'S OWN

*the hatchways being covered over with a strong splinter-netting, that they might not be deprived of fresh air in their crowded situation. The charge of the prize having been confided to the first lieutenant and fifty men, the two ships were separated and laid-to, to repair the damages sustained in the conflict.*

Captain M——, whose wounds were not serious, had descended for a short time to have them washed and dressed. His anxiety to put his ship in an efficient state and get clear of the bay previous to bad weather coming on had induced him to return on deck as soon as he had taken a little refreshment.

M'Elvina had also cleansed himself from the gore with which he had been begrimed, and having applied to the surgeon to assuage the pain of a severe cut which he had received on his shoulder, came upon the quarter-deck with his arm in a sling, dressed with his usual precision and neatness. He touched his hat to Captain M——, with whom he had not communicated since he had quitted him on the quarter-deck of the French frigate to create the fortunate diversion in favour of the boarders.

"Captain M'Elvina," said Captain M——, taking his hand and shaking it warmly, "I can hardly express how much I am obliged to you for your conduct this day. You may be assured that, upon my return, I shall not fail to make a proper representation of it to Government. I only wish that there was any situation in my ship that could induce you to remain."

"Thank you, Captain M——," replied M'Elvina, smiling; "but, although on a smaller scale, I have long been accustomed to command, and I should be very sorry that a vacancy should occur in the only situation I would accept."

"I expected an answer to that effect," replied Captain M——. "However, you have this day nobly redeemed your character, and silenced any imputations of hostility to your country that might be thrown upon you in consequence of your late employment, and I sincerely congratulate you."

"Captain M——, as you are kind enough to express friendly feelings towards me, may I request that they may be shown by the interest you take in young Seymour? I cannot but approve his following the honourable career marked out for him, and my regret at parting with one who has so entwined

## THE KING'S OWN

himself round my heart will be considerably lessened by the assurance that you will be his friend and protector. Any expenses——”

“Not one word upon that score,” replied Captain M——; “the boy saved my life this day by his unusual presence of mind, and I shall watch over him as if he were my own child.”

“His education?”

“Shall be attended to. I pledge you my honour to do him every justice.”

M'Elvina bowed, and walked away to the other side of the quarter-deck; the idea of parting with Willy was always painful to him, and weak with the loss of blood, he was afraid that the emotion would be perceived, which he now felt less able to control.

Thus it is with proud man. He struggles to conceal effects arising from feelings which do honour to his nature, but feels no shame when he disgraces himself by allowing his passions to get the better of his reason, and all because he would not be thought *womanish*! I'm particularly fond of crying myself.

The list of killed and wounded was brought up by the second lieutenant (the duty of the first, who was in charge of the prize, having devolved upon him), the former having been ascertained by mustering the ship's company, the latter from the report of the surgeon.

A deep sigh escaped from the breast of the captain as he looked down at the total. “Forty-four killed; sixty-seven wounded! This is heavy indeed. Poor Stevenson, I thought he was only wounded.”

“Since dead, sir,” replied the second lieutenant; “we have lost a pleasant messmate.”

“And his Majesty a valuable officer,” replied the captain. “I am afraid his mother will feel it in more ways than one; he supported her, I think.”

“He did, sir. Will you not give an acting order to one of the young gentlemen?” (It was the third lieutenant over whom they were lamenting.)

“Yes, make it out for Mr. Robertson.”

“He's in the list, sir.”

“What! killed? So he is, poor fellow! Well, then—Mr. Wheatley, let it be made out for him.”

## THE KING'S OWN

“Ay, ay, sir.”

It was not until the ensuing day that the loss of the enemy could be ascertained. Crowded as were her decks with troops, it was enormous. Not only the first and second captains, second lieutenant, and seven junior officers of the frigate had fallen, but eleven officers of the detachment of soldiers sent on board of her. The total loss appeared to be one hundred and forty-seven killed and one hundred and eighty-four wounded, out of an aggregate of nearly nine hundred men.

In a few days the *Aspasia* and her prize arrived at Plymouth, the English colours proudly waving over the tricoloured flag of her late opponent, and both vessels ran into Hamoaze amidst the cheers of thousands of spectators assembled upon Mount Wise and Mount Edgecomb to greet their gallant and successful defenders. Captain M—— immediately proceeded to London, where the representation which he made of M'Elvina's conduct was followed by an order for his immediate release; and M'Elvina, taking an affectionate leave of Willy, with a parting injunction to *be honest*, set off to report to old Hornblow and his daughter Susan all the circumstances attending the capture of his lugger, and the events which had subsequently ensued.

## CHAPTER XVIII

So, poverty at home and debts abroad,  
My present fortune bad, my hopes yet worse !  
What will become of me ?

SOUTHERON'S *Isabella*.

THE gentleman who had supposed himself the next heir to the entailed property vacant by the demise of Admiral De Courcy, and whose hasty visit and departure from —— Hall we have mentioned in a previous chapter, was a third cousin of the deceased. His history is short. He had squandered away the personal property left him by his father, and his family estate, which was of greater extent than value, was mortgaged for even more than it was worth. He had latterly subsisted by borrowing large sums of money at exorbitant

## THE KING'S OWN

interest, upon the expectancy of succeeding to the property of Admiral De Courcy. The result of his visit to the hall was, therefore, unsatisfactory in more ways than one, and before he had arrived at his own residence his obsequious little friend in black had reminded him of certain bonds which were in his possession, and assumed a tone and demeanour towards his client very different from that in which he had addressed the supposed inheritor of the large property of D——, intimating in very plain terms that some speedy arrangement must be made.

Rainscourt, who had nothing left except the old castle on his property at Galway, his manorial rights, and the unbounded attachment and devotion of the wild tenants, who looked upon him as their feudal chieftain, felt convinced that he had no resource but to escape from his numerous creditors, who would not hesitate to put him in durance, and whose impatience had been with difficulty restrained until the death of the admiral. The speedy arrangement upon which he determined was to set off immediately for Ireland, and by regaining his castle, defy legal authority, if there could be found any that would be rash enough to attempt his person when encircled by his lawless retainers.

As he descended from the chaise at the handsomely furnished lodgings in the west end of the metropolis which he had engaged, his companion informed him with a haughty air that he would have the honour of paying his respects on the ensuing noon; while Rainscourt, with his usual indifference to money, dismissed the post-boys with a handsome gratuity, although there were not many guineas left in his purse, and then proceeded up to the drawing-room on the first floor, where his wife and only daughter were anxiously awaiting his arrival.

Mrs. Rainscourt, still a fine and elegant woman, had in her youth been remarkable for her great personal attractions, and for two seasons had been considered as the *belle* of the Irish metropolis. She was at that period a high-spirited and generous-minded girl, easily provoked and as easily appeased, proud of her beauty and her accomplishments, which her worldly-minded parents were in hopes would be bartered for a coronet. Rainscourt was also at that time one of the handsomest, if not the handsomest man in Ireland, with the advantage of polished manners, talent, and ancient birth.



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Received and courted in every society, he was as indefatigable in squandering away his property as the parents of Mrs. Rainscourt were in trying to obtain an advantageous establishment for their daughter. Rainscourt was proud and overbearing in disposition; vain to excess of his personal advantages, he considered himself irresistible with the other sex. He had seen and admired his future spouse, but still, as he required an alliance which would enable him to indulge in his extravagance, and as her parents were aware that Rainscourt was, or would soon be, a ruined man, in all probability they would never have come in contact, but have rolled in different orbits, more consonant to their views and their happiness, had it not occurred that, at a large and convivial party, Rainscourt's vanity had been piqued by his companions, who told him that he never could obtain the hand of Miss —, whose parents aspired to a higher connection. Piqued at this remark, and flushed with the wine that had been freely circulated, he offered to stake a considerable sum that he would succeed before a certain allotted time. The wager was accepted. Rainscourt courted without affection, and by his assiduities and feigned attachment, ultimately succeeded in persuading the fond girl to destroy all the golden visions of her parents and resign herself to his arms, where he assured her that competence and love would be found more than commensurate to a coronet and neglect.

They eloped; all Dublin was in an uproar for three days. Rainscourt received the amount of his bet and the congratulations of his friends, and for a short time he and his wife lived together without any serious fracas. The first that occurred proceeded from an anonymous letter, evidently written by some envious and disappointed female, acquainting Mrs. Rainscourt with all the circumstances attending the bet, to which she had been sacrificed. This mortifying news was received with showers of tears and some upbraiding, for Mrs. Rainscourt really loved her husband; and although patched up by Rainscourt's protestations as to the falsehood of the accusation, it sunk deep into her heart, and was but the forerunner of future misery.

Rainscourt soon became tired of a woman whom he had never loved; cursed his own vanity, that had induced him

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to saddle himself with such an encumbrance as a wife ; and by alternate violence and moroseness, irritated her feelings and roused her spirit. Neglect on his part produced indifference on her side, and as the means of gaiety and expense melted away, so did all respect and esteem for each other.

An extravagant man seldom makes a good husband ; he becomes embarrassed, and his circumstances prey upon his mind and sour his temper. A woman who has, before marriage, been the admiration of the metropolis is not very likely to prove a good wife. She still sighs for the adulation that she received, and which from habit has become necessary to her, and would exact from the man for whom she has given up the world all the attention that she has lost by the sacrifice.

Mr. and Mrs. Rainscourt were joined, but they were not one. Like many others in this world of error, their marriage might be typified by a vial, of which one half had been filled with oil and the other with water, having a cork in its mouth, which confined them and forced them to remain in contact, although they refused to unite. The fruit of this marriage was one daughter, now about six years old.

"Well, Mr. Rainscourt, all is well, I hope ; and may I not kiss my daughter and congratulate her upon being one of the largest heiresses in the kingdom ?"

"You may, if you please, madam."

"May, if I please ? Why, is it not so, Mr. Rainscourt ?" replied the lady, startled at the moody brow of her husband as he threw himself on the sofa.

Now, Rainscourt would not have so immediately answered the question, but he was determined that his spouse should participate in those pangs of disappointment which swelled his own breast ; as a partner of all his joys, she was, of course, fully entitled to an equal proportion of his cares.

"No, madam, it is not so."

"Surely you are trifling with me, Mr. Rainscourt ; is not the admiral dead ?"

"Yes, madam, and his grandchild is alive."

"His grandchild !" cried the lady in *alto*, pallid with vexation and disappointment. "Well, Mr. Rainscourt, this is another specimen of your usual prudence and foresight. What man in his senses would not have ascertained such a

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fact previous to squandering away his whole property and leaving his daughter a beggar?"

"I think, madam, if the property has been squandered, as you term it, that you have assisted me in so doing. At all events, the property was my own; for I cannot exactly recollect that you increased it one shilling when I married you."

"Certainly not much, Mr. Rainscourt, except, indeed, the amount of the bet. I consider that as my marriage portion," replied the lady, with a sneer.

"Never made a worse bet in my life," replied the gentleman, throwing his legs upon the sofa.

"Perhaps not," replied his wife, with offended seriousness; "but recollect, Mr. Rainscourt, that *you* have no one to blame but yourself; *you* were not deceived. I might have been happy—might have met with sincerity and reciprocal affection. Your conduct towards me was an act of cruelty, which would have called forth some compunction in the breast of my bitterest enemy; and yet, unoffending, I was heartlessly sacrificed to your vanity."

"Say, rather, to your own, which blinded you, or you would have been able to discriminate better."

Mrs. Rainscourt burst into tears. Before her emotion could be controlled, her husband, who was hardened to these scenes of alternate anger and grief, either was or pretended to be in a sound sleep.

The little girl had nestled close to her mother at the ebullition of her feelings, and waited in silence until it was exhausted.

"Why, mamma, I thought you said we should be so happy now."

"Did I, my dear?" replied Mrs. Rainscourt mournfully.

"Yes, you did, and told me that we should have a fine house in London, and that we should not go back to the old castle again. I was sorry for that, though. Where shall we go now, mamma?"

"God knows, my child; you must ask your father."

"Papa's asleep, and I must not wake him. I do hope we shall go back to the castle."

"Then you'll have your wish, my love," replied Mr. Rainscourt, rousing up, "for I start this very evening."

"Are we to go with you, Mr. Rainscourt?" asked Mrs. Rainscourt calmly; "or are we to be left here?"

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"As you please ; but I must be off, for that little scoundrel T—— threatened me with a visit to-morrow morning as I got out of the chaise, and I am aware that he will not come without a companion or two."

"T—— ! What T—— ? Your friend T—— ! that you brought from Dublin with you, and who professes so much admiration and esteem—your own factotum ?"

"Yes, my own factotum—snivelling little scoundrel. But, however, there's no time to be lost. You have some jewels, my dear, and other articles of value ; you had better pack them up and consign them to me as soon as possible. You may then take your choice—go with me now, or follow me in a day or two. They cannot arrest *you*."

"I am aware of that, Mr. Rainscourt," replied the lady ; "but as I may not have the means of following, my daughter and I will, if you please, become a part of your travelling encumbrance, as well as the jewels and other articles of value."

"Be it so," replied the gentleman, who perfectly understood her sarcastic meaning, but did not think it advisable to retort at the moment ; "one post-chaise will carry us all ; but we must leave town at twelve o'clock this night. If I recollect right, we are asked to a rout at Lady G——'s ?"

"We are ; but pray, Mr. Rainscourt, how am I to get ready so soon ? The servants must be paid ; all the bills must be called in."

"If you wait until I can pay all the bills, you must wait till eternity, perhaps. Pack up everything of value that is portable, without the knowledge of the servants ; your jewels you can have upon your own person, or in a pocket, if you ever wear one. Order the carriage, dress, and we will both go to the rout. I shall leave word with Roberts to bring me any letters which may be sent, telling him that the admiral is not dead yet, although hourly expected ; nothing has transpired to the contrary. I can slip away from the rout and write the letter myself, which I will send by a porter. When I go home, and the chaise which I shall order is at the door, I will put Emily in it, and call for you at Lady G——'s. The servants may suspect something, but it will then be too late."

Danger will unite those who are at variance. Mrs. R. entered readily into the proposed arrangements, which necessity imposed upon them, and in a few hours father, mother,

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and daughter were on their way to Ireland, leaving the house-rent, butchers', bakers', chandlers', and all other bills, of no trifling sum-total, to be paid at some more favourable opportunity. The servants indemnified themselves as well as they could by seizing what was left and cursing the elopers; and the obsequious little gentleman in black vowed vengeance as he quitted the deserted mansion, to which he had paid his promised visit in the morning, with a particular friend or two, to enforce his arguments with Mr. Rainscourt.

### CHAPTER XIX

*Fal.* Have you provided me here half-a-dozen sufficient men?

*Shal.* Marry have we, sir.

*Fal.* Let me see them, I beseech you.

*Shal.* Where's the roll! where's the roll!

—Let them appear as I call.—SHAKESPEARE.

AS the reader will have a more intimate acquaintance with them hereafter, I must now enter into some description of the characters of the captain and officers with whom our hero was fated to be a shipmate. To begin with the captain, who has already made his appearance in the course of these pages:—

Captain M—— was the son of a north-country gentleman—one of the numerous class still existing in this world who have inherited large ideas and small fortunes. As usual, the latter were got rid of much sooner than the former. The consequence was, that although young M—— was an only son, it was considered advisable that he should be brought up to some profession. The naval service was selected by himself, and approved of by his father, who, although he had no money, had some interest; that is to say, he had powerful and wealthy connections, who, for their own sakes, rather than have to support their young relation, would exert themselves to make him independent.

M—— rose to the rank of post-captain as fast as his friends could wish, and did credit to their patronage. Having once obtained for him the highest rank that the profession could

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offer, until he became an admiral from seniority, they thought that they had done enough ; and had it not been that Captain M——, by his zeal and abilities, had secured a personal interest at the Board, he might have languished on half-pay ; but his services were appreciated, and he was too good an officer not to be employed. His father was dead, and the payment of debts which he had contracted, and the purchase of an annuity for his mother, had swallowed up almost all the prize-money which Captain M——, who had been very successful, had realised ; but he was single from choice, and frugal from habit. His pay and the interest of the small remains of prize-money in the Funds were more than adequate to his wants. He was enthusiastic in his profession, and had the bad taste to prefer a fine ship to a fine lady.

Having entered the service at a later period than was usual, he had the advantage of an excellent education, which, being naturally of a serious disposition and fond of reading, he had very much improved by study. As an officer he was a perfect master of his profession, both in theory and practice, and was what is termed afloat “all for the service.” Indeed, this feeling was so powerful in him that, like Aaron’s rod, it swallowed up all the rest. If there was any blemish in his character, it was in this point. Correct himself, he made no allowance for indiscretion ; inflexibly severe, but always just, he in no instance ever spared himself, nor would he ever be persuaded to spare others. The rules and regulations of the service, as laid down by the Board of Admiralty and the articles of war, were as rigidly observed by him, and exacted from others, as if they had been added to the Decalogue ; and any deviation or neglect was sure to bring down reprimand or punishment upon the offender, whether it happened to be the senior lieutenant or the smallest boy in the ship’s company.

But with all his severity, so determined was Captain M—— to be just that he never would exercise the power without due reflection. On one occasion, in which the conduct of a sailor had been very offensive, the first lieutenant observed that summary punishment would have a very beneficial effect upon the ship’s company in general. “Perhaps it might, Mr. H——,” replied he ; “but it is against a rule which I have laid down, and from which I never deviate. Irritated



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as I am at this moment with the man's conduct, I may perhaps consider it in a more heinous light than it deserves, and be guilty of too great severity. I am liable to error—subject, as others, to be led away by the feelings of the moment—and have therefore made a compact with myself never to punish until twenty-four hours after the offence has been committed; and so repeatedly, when at the time I have settled in my mind the quantum of punishment that the offender should receive, have I found, upon reflection, which delay has given time for, reasons to mitigate the severity, that I wish, for the benefit of the service, that the Admiralty would give a standing order to that effect."

Such was the character of Captain M——. It hardly need be added, after the events already narrated of this history, that he was a man of undaunted bravery. In his person he was tall, and rather slight in figure. His features were regular, but there was a sternness in his countenance and lines of deep thought on his brow which rendered the expression unpleasing. It was only when he smiled that you would have pronounced him handsome; then he was more than handsome, he was fascinating.

Mr. Bully, the first lieutenant (who was the second lieutenant in the ship in the action with the French frigate), was an officer who well understood his duty. He had the merit of implicitly obeying all orders; and considering the well-known fact that a first lieutenant has always sufficient cause to be put out of temper at least twenty times during the twelve hours, he was as good-tempered as a first lieutenant could possibly be. He had entered the service when very young, and being of humble extraction, had not had any advantage of education. In person he was short and thick-set, and having suffered severely from the smallpox during his infancy, was by no means prepossessing in his outward appearance.

The second lieutenant, whose name was Price, was a good-looking young man, who kept his watch and read Shakspeare. He was constantly attempting to quote his favourite author; but, fortunately for those who were not fond of quotations, his memory was very defective.

Mr. Courtenay, the third lieutenant, was a little, bilious-looking personage, who, to use the master's phraseology, was

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never quite happy unless he was d——d miserable. He was full of misfortunes and grievances, and always complaining or laughing at his real or imaginary disasters ; but his complaint would often end in a laugh, or his mirth terminate in a whine. You never could exactly say whether he was in joke or in earnest. There was such a serio-comic humour about him, that one side of his countenance would express pleasure, while the other indicated vexation. There seemed to be a perpetual war in his composition of good-humour *versus* bile, both of which were most unaccountably blended in the same temperament.

According to seniority, Mr. Pearce, the master, is the next to be introduced to the reader. In external appearance a rough, hard-headed north-countryman, but with an unpromising exterior, he was a man with sense and feeling. He had every requisite for his situation : his nerves were like a chain-cable ; he was correct and zealous in his duty, and a great favourite of the captain's, who was his countryman. He was about fifty years of age, a married man, with a large family.

The surgeon, whose name was Macallan, was also most deservedly a great favourite with Captain M—— ; indeed, there was a friendship between them, grown out of long acquaintance with each other's worth, inconsistent with and unusual in a service where the almost despotic power of the superior renders the intimacy of the inferior similar to the smoothing with your hand the paw of a lion, whose fangs, in a moment of caprice, may be darted into your flesh. He was a slight-made, spare man, of about thirty-five years of age, and had graduated and received his diploma at Edinburgh—an unusual circumstance at that period, although the education in the service was so defective that the medical officers were generally the best informed in the ship. But he was more than the above ; he was a naturalist, a man of profound research, and well informed upon most points ; of an amiable and gentle disposition, and a sincere Christian.

It would naturally be inferred that those whose profession it is to investigate the human frame, and constantly have before their eyes the truth that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, would be more inclined than others to acknowledge the Infinite wisdom and power. But this is too often found

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not to be the case, and it would appear as if the old *scholium*, that "too much familiarity breeds contempt," may be found to act upon the human mind even when in communion with the Deity. With what awe does the first acquaintance with death impress us ! What a thrill passes through the living as it bends over the inanimate body from which the spirit has departed ! the clay that returns to the dust from which it sprung, the tenement that was lately endued with volition and life, the frame that exhibited a perfection of mechanism, deriding all human power and confounding all human imagination, now an inanimate mass, rapidly decomposing, and soon to become a heap of corruption !

Strong as the feeling is, how evanescent it becomes when once familiarised ! It has no longer power over the senses, and the soldier and sailor pillow themselves on the corpse with perfect indifference, if not with a jest. So it is with those who are accustomed to *post-mortem* arrangements, who wash and lay out the body previous to interment.

Yet, although we acknowledge that habit will remove the first impressions of awe, how is it that the minute investigation upon which conviction ought to be founded should too often have the contrary effect from that which it should produce ? Is it because mystery, the parent of awe, is in a certain degree removed ?

Faith, says the Apostle, is the evidence of things not seen. There would be no merit in believing what is perfectly evident to the senses. Yet some would argue that the evidence ought to be more clear and palpable. If so, would not the awe be also removed, and would religion gain by it ? We have enough imparted to convince us that all is right ; and is not that which is hidden or secret purposely intended to produce that awe, without which the proud mind of man would spurn at infinite wisdom ?

The above digression had nearly caused me to omit that Macallan had one peculiar failing. His language, from long study, had been borrowed from books more than from men ; and when he entered upon his favourite science of natural history, his enthusiasm made him more pedantic in his style and pompous in his phraseology than ever. But who is perfect ?

The purser, O'Keefe, was an elderly man, very careful of

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the pounds, shillings, and pence. He was afflicted with an incurable deafness, which he never thought proper to acknowledge, but catching at a word or two in the sentence, would frame his answer accordingly, occasioning frequent mirth to his messmates, whom he imagined were laughing with and not at him. For the present I shall pass over the rest of the officers, with the exception of the boatswain, whose character was of a very peculiar nature.

He was a man who had long been considered as one of the best boatswains in the service, and had been applied for by Captain M——. He used his cane with severity, but had always some jest at hand to soften down the smart of the blow, and was very active in his own person, setting an example to the men. It had, however, happened that, about a year before he joined, Mr. Hardsett had been induced by his wife to go with her to a conventicle which the rising sect of Methodists had established at the port where she resided ; and whether it was that his former life smote his conscience or that the preacher was unusually powerful, he soon became one of the most zealous of his converts. He read nothing but his Bible, which employed all his leisure hours, and he was continually quoting it in his conversation. But he was not exactly a Methodist, taking the cognomen in the worst or the best interpretation ; he was an enthusiast and a fanatic, notwithstanding which he contrived that his duty towards his Maker should not interfere with that of boatswain of the ship. Captain M—— regretted the man's bigotry ; but as he never tried to make any converts and did his duty in his situation, the captain did not attempt to interfere with his religious opinions, the more so as he was convinced that Hardsett was sincere.

The *Aspasia* was but a short time in harbour, for the captain was anxious to add to the laurels which he had already won, and having reported the ship ready for sea, received an order to proceed to the West India station. The frigate was unmoored, the blue-peter hoisted, and the fore-top-sail loosened as the signal for departure ; and after lying a short time with her anchor "shot stay apeak," Captain M—— came on board, the anchor was run up to the bows, and once more the frigate started, like an armed knight in search of battle and adventure.

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It was two o'clock in the afternoon, and the tenants of the gun-room had assembled to their repast. "Now all my misery is about to commence," cried Courtenay, as he took his seat at the gun-room table, on which the dinner was smoking in all the variety of pea-soup, Irish stew, and boiled mutton with caper sauce.

"Indeed!" said the master. "Pray, then, what is it that you have been grumbling about ever since you have joined the ship?"

"Psha! they were only petty vexations, but now we are at sea. I shall be sea-sick. I am always obliged to throw off the accumulation of bile whenever I go out of harbour."

"I say, doctor," replied Pearce, "can you stop up the leak in that little gentleman's liver? He's not content to keep a hand-pump going to get rid of his bile when in harbour, but it seems that he requires the chain-pumps to be manned when he goes to sea."

"Chain-pumps!" exclaimed Courtenay, shuddering, and drawing back his head with a grimace at the idea of such a forcible discharge, and then looking round at his messmates with one of his serio-comic faces.

"Pumps! ay," said Price; "you remember Shakspeare in the 'Tempest,' he says—dear me—I——"

"Come, Price," said Courtenay, "don't make me sick before my time; it's unkind. You don't know what an analogy there is between spouting and sea-sickness. In both cases you throw up what is nauseous, because your head or your stomach is too weak to retain it. Spare me, then, a quotation, my dear fellow, till you see me in the agony of Nature 'aback,' and then one will be of service in assisting her efforts to 'box off.' I say, Billy Pitt, did you stow away the two jars of pickled cabbage in my cabin?"

We must here break off the conversation to introduce this personage to the reader. He was a black, who ran away, when quite a lad, from his master at Barbadoes, and entered on board of a man-of-war. Macallan, the surgeon, had taken a fancy to him, and he had been his servant for some years, following him into different ships. He was a very intelligent and singular character. Macallan had taught him to read and write, and he was not a little proud of his acquirements. He was excessively good-humoured, and a general favourite

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of the officers and ship's company, who used to amuse themselves with his peculiarities and allow him a greater freedom than usual. But Billy's grand *forte*, in his own opinion, was a lexicographer. He had a small Entick's dictionary, which he always carried in his jacket-pocket, and nothing gave him so much pleasure as any one referring to him for the meaning of a hard word, which, although he could not always explain correctly, he certainly did most readily. Moreover, he was, as may be supposed, very fond of interlarding his conversation with high-sounding phraseology, without much regard as to the context.

Although Billy Pitt was the doctor's servant, Courtenay, who had taken a great fancy to him, used to employ him as his own, to which, as the doctor was not a man who required much attendance himself and was very good-natured, no objection had been raised.

We must repeat the question—

"I say, Billy Pitt, did you stow away the two jars of pickled cabbage in my cabin?"

"No, sar, I no hab 'em to stow. Woman say that Mr. Kartney not pay for the pickled onun—say quite incongruous send any more."

"Not pay for the onions! No, to be sure I didn't; but I gave her a fresh order, which is the same thing." (Price laid down the potato which he was in the act of peeling, and stared at Courtenay with astonishment.) "Well, to a London tradesman it is, I can assure you."

"It may be, but I cannot conceive how. If you owe me ten shillings, I can't consider borrowing ten more the same thing as paying the first."

"Pooh! you do not understand these things."

"I do not, most certainly," replied the master, resuming his potato.

"And so you haven't got them?" resumed Courtenay to the servant.

"No, sar. She say Massa Kartney owe nine shillings for onuns, and say I owe farten for 'baccy, and not trust us any more. I tell just as she say, sir. Gentleman never pay for anything. She call me d——d nigger, and say like massa like man. I tell her not give any more rhoromantade, and walk out of shop."



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"Well, how cursed annoying! Now, I never set my mind upon anything but I'm disappointed. One might as well be Sancho in the Isle of Barataria. I think I'll go up to the captain and ask him to heave-to while I send for them. Do you think he would, master, eh?" said Courtenay in affected simplicity of interrogation.

"You had better try him," replied Pearce, laughing.

"Well, it would be very considerate of him, and pickled cabbage is the only thing that cures my sea-sickness."—(Perceiving Price about to speak)—"Stop now—it's no use—there's not a word about pickled cabbage in Shakspeare."

"I did not say that there was," retorted Price; "but there's 'beef without mustard,' and that will be your case now."

"And there's 'Write me down an ass,' " replied Courtenay, who was not a little vexed at the loss of his favourite condiment.

"Did you hear what Courtenay said of you, O'Keefe?" continued Price, turning to the purser.

"Yes—yes—I know—hand him over a glass; but this is not a clane one. Steward, will you bring a clane wine-glass?"

The rest laughed, while Courtenay proceeded—

"Why, O'Keefe, you hear better than ever. I say, doctor, you must put me in the sick list; I'm not fit to take charge of a watch."

"If you'll prove that to me," replied Macallan, "I certainly will report you."

"Well, I'll prove it to you in five seconds. I'm just in that state, that if everything in the ship was to go overboard to the devil I shouldn't care. Now, with such a feeling of indifference a person is not fit to be trusted with the charge of a watch."

"That you're not fit to be trusted with the charge of a watch, as you state it yourself, I shall not deny," replied Macallan; "but I consider that to be a complaint for which you ought rather to be put *off* the list than on it."

"Ha! ha! ha! I say, Courtenay, you know what Shakspeare says—'Tis the curse of service,' that—that——"

"All hands, 'bout ship!" now resounded through the ship as it was repeated in the variety of basses of the boatswain

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and his mates at either hatchway, one of the youngsters of the watch running down at the same time to acquaint the officers, in his shrill falsetto, with that which had been roared out loud enough to startle even the deaf purser. The first lieutenant, followed by the master, brushed by him, and was up the ladder before his supererogatory communication could be delivered.

"How cursed annoying!" cried Courtenay. "I was just feeling a little better, and now I shall be worse than ever."

"You recollect in the 'Tempest,' said Price, "where Shakspeare says——"

"Forecastle, there!" roared out Captain M—— from the quarter-deck in a voice that was distinctly heard below.

"By Jove! you'd better skip for it, or you'll have what Captain M—— says. He's hailing your station," said Courtenay, laughing—a piece of advice immediately acted upon by Price, who was up the ladder and on the fore-castle in a few seconds. "And I must go up too. How cursed annoying to be stationed in the waist! Nothing to do, except to stop my ears against the infernal stamp-and-go of the marines and after-guards over my head; sweet music to a first lieutenant, but to me discord most horrible. I could *stamp* with vexation."

"Had you not better *go* first and *stamp* afterwards?" observed the surgeon drily.

"I think I had, indeed," replied Courtenay, as he bolted out of the gun-room door. "Cursed annoying; but the captain is such a bilious subject."

## CHAPTER XX

This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.—*Henry IV.*, Part I.

WE must now descend to the steerage, where our hero is seated in the berth, in company with a dozen more (as they designated themselves, from the extreme heat of their domicile) *perspiring* young heroes, who were amusing themselves with crunching hard biscuits, and ~~at~~ the same time a due

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proportion of those little animals of the scarabee tribe denominated weevils, who had located themselves in the *unleavened bread*, and which the midshipmen declared to be the only fresh meat which they had tasted for some time.

Captain M——'s character stood so high at the Admiralty, that the major part of the young aspirants who had been committed to his charge were of good family and connections. At that time few of the aristocracy or gentry ventured to send their sons into the navy, whereas at present none but those classes can obtain admission.

A better school for training young officers could not have been selected, and the midshipmen's berth of the *Aspasia* was as superior to those in other ships as Captain M—— was himself to the generality of his contemporary captains in the service. But I cannot pay these young men the compliment to introduce them one by one, as I did the gun-room officers. It would be an anomaly unheard of. I shall, therefore, with every respect for them, describe them just as I want them. It was one bell after eight o'clock; a bottle of ship's rum, a black-jack of putrid water, and a tin bread-basket are on the table, which is lighted with a tallow-candle of about thirteen to the pound.

"I say, Mr. Jerry Sneak, what are you after there? What are you foraging for in that locker?" said one of the oldsters of the berth to a half-starved, weak-looking object of a youngster, whose friends had sent him to sea with the hopes of improving his stamina.

"What for? Why, for my supper, if you must know. D'ye think I look too fat? I stowed it away before I went on deck, that it might not fall into your ravenous maw."

"Mind your stops, my Jack of the Bonehouse, or I shall shy a biscuit at your head."

"Do, and prove your bravery; it will be so very courageous, I suppose you will expect to be gazetted for it."

The youngster who had been dignified with the above sobriquet, and who made these replies, was certainly a most miserable-looking object, and looked as if a top-gallant breeze would have blown him to atoms. But if his body was weak, his tongue was most powerful. He resorted to no other weapon, and used that skilfully. He was a species of Thersites, and no dread of punishment could control his railing. He

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offered no resistance, but bent down like the reed and resumed his former position as soon as the storm was over. His keen and sarcastic remarks, although they occasionally subjected him to chastisement, to a certain degree served him as a defence, for he could always raise a laugh at the expense of the individual whom he attacked, with the formidable weapon which he had inherited direct from his mother.

The oldster before mentioned put his hand into the bread-basket and seized a handful of the biscuit. "Now I'll bet you a glass of grog that you don't throw a biscuit at my head," cried Jerry, with a sneer.

"Done," replied the oldster, throwing the contents of his hand at Jerry with all his force.

"I'll just trouble you for that glass of grog, for you've lost," said the youngster, taking it up from the table where it stood before the oldster; "you've only thrown some pieces, and not a biscuit;" and following up his words with deeds, he swallowed down the whole contents of the tumbler, which he replaced very coolly before his opponent.

"Fair bet, and fairly lost," cried the rest of the berth, laughing.

"You scarecrow! you're not worth thrashing," said the oldster angrily.

"Why, that's exactly what I have been trying to impress upon your memory ever since I have joined the ship. There's no credit to be gained by licking a half-starved wretch like I am; but there's Bruce, now" (pointing to one of the oldsters, between whom and his opponent a jealousy subsisted); "why don't you lick him? There would be some credit in that. But you know better than to try it."

"Do I?" retorted the oldster, forgetting himself in the heat of the moment.

"Yes, you do," replied Bruce, jumping up in defiance; and there was every appearance of a disturbance, much to the delight of Jerry, who, provided that they fought, was quite indifferent which party was the victor. But a fortunate interruption took place by the appearance of the master-at-arms.

"Nine o'clock, gentlemen, if you please; the lights must be put out."

"Very well, master-at-arms," replied one of the oldsters.

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The master-at-arms took his seat on a chest close to the door of the berth, aware that a second summons, if not a third, would be requisite before his object was attained. In a few minutes he again put his head into the berth—"Nine o'clock, gentlemen, if you please. I must report you to the first lieutenant."

"Very well, Byfield; it shall be out in a minute."

The master-at-arms resumed his station on the chest outside.

"Why, it's Saturday night," cried Bruce. "Sweethearts and wives, my boys, though I believe none of us are troubled with the latter. Forster, pass the rum."

"I'll pass the bottle, and you may make a bull of it, if you choose."

"Confound it, no more grog, and Saturday night. I must drink 'Auld lang syne,' by heavens!"

The master-at-arms again made his appearance. "Gentlemen, you must put the light out."

"Stop one minute, Byfield. Let us see whether we can get any more rum."

The excuse appeared reasonable to the jack in office, and he disappeared.

"Boy, tell Billy Pitt I want him."

Billy Pitt had turned in, but was soon roused out of his hammock and made his appearance at the berth-door with only his shirt on that he was sleeping in.

"You want me, Massa Bruce?"

"Billy, my beau, you know everything. We sent for you to tell us what's the meaning of a repatee?"

"Repattee, sir—repattee!—stop a bit—Eh—I tell you, sir. Suppose you call me dam nigger, then I call you one dam dirty white-livered son of a b——; dat a repatee, sir."

"Capital, Billy; you shall be a bishop. But, Billy, has your master got any rum in his cabin?"

"Which massa, sir? Massa Courtenay or Massa Doctor?"

"Oh! Courtenay, to be sure. The surgeon never has any."

"Yes, sar, I tink he have a little."

"Be quick, Billy, and fetch it. I will give it you back at the tub to-morrow."

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"Suppose you forget, sar, you put me in very fine predical-ament. Massa Courtenay look dam blue—no, he not look blue, but he look dam yellow," replied Billy, showing his white teeth as he grinned.

"But I won't forget, Billy, upon my honour."

"Well, honour quite enough between two gentlemen. I go fetch the bottle."

Billy soon reappeared with a quart bottle of rum, just as three bells were struck. "By gad! I rattle the bottle as I take him out—wake Mr. Courtenay—he say, dam black fellow he make everything adrift—cursed annoying, he say, and go to sleep again."

"Really, gentlemen, I cannot wait any longer," resumed the master-at-arms; "the lights must be reported, or I shall be in disgrace."

"Very true, Byfield; you are only doing your duty. Will you take a glass of grog?"

"If you please," replied Mr. Byfield, taking off his hat. "Your health, gentlemen."

"Thank you," replied the midshipmen. "Tank you, sir," replied also Billy Pitt.

"Well, Billy, what's the last word you read in your dictionary?"

"Last word? Let me see—oh! commission, sar. You know dat word?"

"Commission! We all know what that is, Billy, and shall be glad to get it too, by-and-by."

"Yes, sar; but there are two kind of commission. One you want, obliged to wait for; one I want, always have at once—commission as agent, sar."

"Oh, I understand," replied Bruce; "five per cent. on the bottle, eh?"

"Five per cent. not make a tiff glass of grog, Massa Bruce."

"Well then, Billy, you shall have ten per cent.," replied the midshipman, pouring him out a north-wester. "Will that do?"

The black had the politeness to drink the health of all the gentlemen of the berth separately before he poured the liquor down his throat. "Massa Bruce, I tink doctor got a little rum in his cabin."



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"Go and fetch it, Billy; you shall have it back to-morrow."

"Honour, Mr. Bruce."

"Honour, Mr. Pitt."

"Ten per cent., Massa Bruce," continued Billy, grinning.

"Ten per cent. is the bargain."

"I go see."

Another quart bottle made its appearance; and the agent, having received his commission, made his bow, and returned to his hammock.

"I do—really—think—upon—my—word—that that—black—scoundrel—would—sell—his—own—mother—for—a—stiff—glass—of—grog," observed a youngster of the name of Prose, a cockney, who drawled out his words, which, "like a wounded snake, dragged their slow length along."

"The lights, gentlemen, if you please," resumed the master-at-arms, putting his head again into the door.

"Another commission," said Jerry; "a tax upon light. Billy Pitt has the best right to it."

A second glass of grog was poured out, and the bribe disappeared down Mr. Byfield's gullet.

"Now we'll put the light out," said one of the oldsters, covering the candlestick with a hat.

"If you will put your candle into my lantern," observed the obsequious master-at-arms, "I can then report the lights out. Of course you will allow it to remain there?"

The suggestion was adopted, and the light was reported out to the first lieutenant at the very moment that it was taken out of the lantern again and replaced in the candlestick. The duplicate supply began to have its effect upon our incipient heroes, who commenced talking of their friends. Bruce, a fine, manly, honourable Scotchman, had the peculiarity of always allying himself when half drunk to the royal house who formerly sat upon the throne of England; but when quite intoxicated, he was so treasonable as to declare himself the lawful king of Great Britain. Glass after glass increased his propinquity to the throne, till at last he seated himself on it, and the uproar of the whole party rose to that height that the first lieutenant sent out desiring the midshipmen immediately to retire to their hammocks.

"Send me to bed! 'Proud man, dressed in a little brief authority.' If the Lord's anointed had been respected, he,

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with millions, would be now bending the knee to me. Well, if I can't be king of all England, at least I'll be king in this berth. Tell me," cried Bruce, seizing the unfortunate Prose by the collar, "am I not king?"

"Why—according—to—the—best—of—my—belief," said Prose, "I—should—rather—be—inclined—to—think—that—you—are—not—the—king."

"Am not, base slave!" cried Bruce, throwing him on the deck, and putting his foot on his chest.

"No—if—I die for it—I don't care—but if you are—not king—I must own—that—you—are one of—my thirty tyrants," drawled out Prose, half suffocated with the pressure.

"I—do—declare," cried Jerry, imitating Prose's drawl, "that—he—has—squeezed—a pun—out—of—you."

"Am not I king?" resumed Bruce, seizing Jerry, who had advanced within reach to laugh at Prose.

"I feel that you ought to be," replied Jerry; "and I don't doubt your lineal descent, for you have all the dispositions of the race from which you claim descent. A boon, your gracious majesty," continued Jerry, bending on one knee.

"Thou shalt have it, my loyal subject," replied Bruce, who was delighted with the homage, "even (as Ahasuerus said to Esther) to the half of my kingdom."

"God forbid that I should deprive your majesty of that," replied Jerry, smiling at the idea of halving nothing. "It is only to request that I may not keep the middle watch to-night."

"Rise, Jerry; you shall not keep a night-watch for a fortnight."

"I humbly thank your most gracious majesty," replied the astute boy, who was a youngster of the watch of which Bruce was mate.

As the reader may be amused with the result of this promise, he must know that Bruce, who did not recollect what had passed, when he perceived Jerry not to be on deck, sent down for him. The youngster on his appearance claimed his promise; and his claim was allowed by Bruce, rather than he would acknowledge himself to have been intoxicated. Jerry, upon the strength of the agreement, continued for more than the prescribed time to sleep in every night-watch, until, aware that he was no longer safe,

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he thought of an expedient which would probably ensure him one night longer, and prevent a disagreeable interruption of his dreams. Prose, whose hammock was hung up next the hatchway, had a bad cold, and Jerry thought it prudent to shift his berth, that he might not be found.

"It's the draught from the hatchway that makes your cold so bad, Prose; you'll never get well while you sleep there. I will give you my inside berth until it is better; 'tis really quite distressing to hear you cough."

"Well, now, Jerry, that's what I call very good-natured of you. I have not had such a friendly act done towards me since I joined the ship, and I do assure you, Jerry, that I shall not be ungrateful; I shall not forget it."

It happened that, on the very night that Prose exchanged berths with Jerry, Bruce made his calculation that the fortnight had elapsed three days back; and although he felt himself bound in honour to keep his promise, yet, feeling rather sore at being overreached, he now ordered the quartermaster to cut Jerry's hammock down by the head. This was supposed to be done, and poor Prose, who had just fallen asleep after keeping the previous watch, awoke with a stunning sensation, and found his feet up at the beams and his head on the deck; while Jerry, who had been awakened by the noise, was obliged to cram the sheets into his mouth that his laughter might be unperceived.

"Well, now, I do declare, this is too bad; I most certainly will complain to the captain to-morrow morning, as sure as my name is Prose. Sentry, bring me a light, and assist me to get my hammock up again; I will not put up with this treatment, I do declare;" and so saying, Prose once more resumed his position in his precarious dormitory.

But during our digression the berth has become empty—some walking, and others, particularly his majesty, reeling to bed. So we shall close this chapter, from which the reader may perceive that, even in the best-regulated ships, there is more going on in a midshipmen's berth than a captain is acquainted with, or that comes between heaven and his philosophy.

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### CHAPTER XXI

With leave, Bassanio, I am half yourself, and I must freely have the half of anything that this same paper brings you.—SHAKESPEARE.

THE castle which had been built by the ancestors of Mr. Rainscourt, and which, in feudal times, had been one of strength and importance, was about two miles from the town of —, in the county of Galway, on the west coast of Ireland; and, as Mr. Rainscourt had correctly surmised when he returned to it, no officer could be found who was bold enough to venture his life by an attempt at caption, surrounded as he was by a savage and devoted peasantry, who had no scruples at bloodshed. Immured within its walls, with little to interest, and no temptation to expend money, Mr. and Mrs. Rainscourt lived for nearly two years, indulging their spleen and discontent in mutual upbraidings, their feelings towards each other, from incessant irritation, being now rather those of hatred than any other term that could be applied. The jewels of Mrs. Rainscourt, and every other article that could be dispensed with, had been sold, and the purse was empty. The goodwill of the tenants of the mortgaged property had for some time supplied the ill-assorted couple with the necessities of life; every day added to their wants, to their hatred, and their despair.

They were seated at the table, having finished a dinner off some game which Mr. Rainscourt had procured with his gun, and which had been their fare, with little variety, ever since the shooting season had commenced, when the old nurse, the only domestic they retained—probably the only one who would remain with them without receiving wages—made her appearance. “And sure there’s a letter for the master; Barney, the post-boy, is just bringing it.”

“Well, where is it?” replied Rainscourt.

“He says that it’s two thirteens that must be paid for it, and the dirty spalpeen of a postmaster told him not to give you the letter without the money for it in his fist.”

“Tell Barney to step in here. Have you two shillings, Mrs. Rainscourt?”

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"Not one, Mr. Rainscourt," replied the lady gloomily.

The nurse reappeared with Barney.

"Well, Barney, where's the letter?" said Mr. Rainscourt.  
"Let me look at it."

"Sure, your honour, it's not me that's refusing it ye; but the master tould me—'Barney,' says he, 'if you give his honour the letter without the two thirteens in your fist, it's a good bating that I'll give ye when ye come back.'"

"Well, but, Barney, let me look at it, and see by the post-mark where it's from. I shall know directly whether I will take it up or not."

"And suppose that your honour should wish to open the letter? It's not for gentlemen like ye to be standing against the temptation;—and then, the two thirteens, your honour."

"Well, Barney, since you won't trust me, and I have no money, you must take the letter back. It might bring me good news; I have had nothing but bad of late."

"And sure enough it might bring you good news. Then your honour shall take the letter, and I'll take the bating;" and the good-natured lad pulled out the letter from his pocket, and gave it to Rainscourt.

Rainscourt, who first wished to ascertain whether it was one of his usual dunning correspondents, examined the post-mark and handwriting of the superscription, that he might return it unopened, and save poor Barney from the beating which he had volunteered to receive for his sake; but the hand was unknown to him, and the post-mark was so faint and illegible that he could not decipher it. He looked into the sides of the letter, and the few words which he could read whetted his curiosity.

"I'm afraid, Barney, that I must open it."

"Good luck to your honour, then, and may it prove so."

The letter was opened, and the contents threw a gleam of pleasure, which had been rarely seen of late, on the brow of the reader. His wife had watched his countenance. "Barney," cried Rainscourt with delight, "call to-morrow, and I'll give you a guinea."

"Sure your honour's in luck, and me too," replied Barney, grinning, and backing out of the room. "I'll go take my bating at once."

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But, to explain the contents of this letter, we must narrate events of which we have lost sight in following up the naval career of our hero.

About three weeks after the death of Admiral de Courcy, the line-of-battle ship in which old Adams had sailed with our hero under his protection returned into port. The vicar, who anxiously awaited her arrival, immediately proceeded there, that he might claim Willy in the capacity of his guardian. Having obtained the address of Captain M——, he called upon him, and opened his case by requesting that the boy might be permitted to come on shore. He was proceeding to narrate the change which had taken place in his ward's prospects, when he was interrupted by Captain M——, who, first detailing the death of old Adams and the conduct of Willy, stated that he had sent the boy home in the prize for an outfit. It was with great feeling that Captain M—— was forced to add the apparent certainty that the vessel, which had never been heard of, had foundered at sea. Shocked at the intelligence, which was communicated at a moment when his heart was expanded at the idea of having been instrumental in repairing the injustice and neglect which had been shown towards his protégé, the vicar, not caring to mention to a stranger the family particulars upon which his request had been grounded, withdrew, without even giving his name or address. Three years afterwards, when, as we have narrated, our hero again made his appearance, Captain M—— had no clue to guide him by which he might communicate the intelligence of his recovery to one whom he naturally concluded did not make such inquiries without having some interest in our hero's welfare.

The vicar in the meantime, although he had every reason to believe that Willy was no more, resorted to every means that his prudence could suggest to ascertain the positive fact. For many months the most strict inquiries were set afloat by his agents whether a captured vessel had been wrecked on the French coast. The prisoners at Verdun and other dépôts were examined; rewards were offered by emissaries in France for the discovery of the boy, but without success. Having waited two years, all hope became extinct, and the letter now received by Mr. Rainscourt was from the vicar, acquainting



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him with the circumstances, and surrendering up the property to him as next-of-kin.

"Pray, Mr. Rainscourt, may I ask the contents of a letter the perusal of which not only makes you so generous, but implies that you expect to have the means of being so?"

When happy ourselves, especially when unexpectedly so, we feel kindly disposed towards others. For a moment Rainscourt seemed to have forgotten all his differences with his wife; and he as readily imparted to her his good fortune as he had, on a previous occasion, his disappointment.

"My dear Clara, the grandchild is dead, and we have possession of the property."

"My dear Clara!" Such an epithet had never been used since the first week of their marriage. Overcome by the joyful intelligence, but more overcome by the kind expression of her husband, which recalled the days when she fondly loved, Mrs. Rainscourt burst into tears, and throwing herself down with her face on his knees, poured out, in sobs, her gratitude to Heaven and her revived affection for her husband.

Their daughter Emily, now ten years old, astonished at so unusual a scene, ran up, impelled as it were by instinct, and completed the family group by clinging to her father. Rainscourt, who was affected, kissed the brow of the child, and congratulated her on becoming an heiress.

"I never knew before that money would do so much good," observed the child, referring to the apparent reconciliation of her parents.

Mrs. Rainscourt rose from her position and sat down at the table, leaning her face upon her hands. "I am afraid that it has come too late," said she mournfully, as she recalled the years of indifference and hostility which had preceded.

Mrs. Rainscourt was correct in her supposition. Respect and esteem had long departed, and without their aid true love was not to be reclaimed. The feeling of renewed attachment was as transient as it was sudden.

"I must be off to England immediately," observed the husband. "I presume that I shall have no difficulty in obtaining money from the bank when I show this letter. Old —— will be ready enough to thrust his notes into my hands now."

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"Shall we not go with you, Mr. Rainscourt?"

"No; you had better remain here till I have arranged matters a little. I must settle with three cursed money-lenders, and take up the bonds from J——. Little scoundrel! he'll be civil enough."

"Well, Mr. Rainscourt, it must, I suppose, be as you decide; but neither Emily nor I are very well equipped in our wardrobes, and you will not be exactly competent to execute our commissions."

"And therefore shall execute none."

"Do you, then, mean to leave us here in rags and beggary while you are amusing yourself in London?" replied Mrs. Rainscourt with asperity. "With your altered circumstances, you will have no want of society, either male or *female*," continued the lady, with an emphasis upon the last word, "and a *wife* will probably be an encumbrance."

"Certainly not such a kind and affectionate one as you have proved, my dear," replied the gentleman sarcastically; "nevertheless, I must decline the pleasure of your company till I have time to look about me a little."

"Perhaps, Mr. Rainscourt, now that you will be able to afford it, you will prefer a separate establishment? If so, I am willing to accede to any proposition you may be inclined to make."

"That's a very sensible remark of yours, my dear, and shall receive due consideration."

"The sooner the better, sir," replied the piqued lady, as Mr. Rainscourt quitted the room.

"My dear child," said Mrs. Rainscourt to her daughter, "you see how cruelly your father treats me. He is a bad man, and you must never pay attention to what he says."

"Papa told me just the same of you, mamma," replied the girl, "yesterday morning when you were walking in the garden."

"Did he? The wretch, to set my own child against me!" cried Mrs. Rainscourt, who had just been guilty of the very same offence which had raised her choler against her husband.

# THE KING'S OWN

## CHAPTER XXII

The Queen of night, whose vast command  
Rules all the sea and half the land ;  
And over moist and crazy brains,  
In high spring-tides at midnight reigns.

*Hudibras.*

AMONG the millions who, on the hallowed and appointed day, lay aside their worldly occupations to bow the knee to the Giver of all good, directing their orisons and their thoughts to one mercy-beaming Power, like so many rays of light concentrated into one focus, I know no class of people in whose breasts the feeling of religion is more deeply implanted than the occupants of that glorious specimen of daring ingenuity—a man-of-war. It is through His works that the Almighty is most sincerely revered, through them that His infinite power is with deepest humility acknowledged. The most forcible arguments, the most pathetic eloquence from the pulpit, will not affect so powerfully the mind of man as the investigation of a blade of grass, or the mechanism of the almost imperceptible insect. If, then, such is the effect upon mankind in general, how strong must be the impressions of those who occupy their business in the great waters! These men “see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.” They behold Him in all His magnificence, in all His beauty, in all His wrath, in all His vastness, in all His variety. Unassisted by theory, they practically feel that God is great, and their worship, although dumb, is sincere.

I am aware that it is the idea of many that sailors have little or no religion, and their dissolute conduct when thrown on shore is certainly a strong argument in support of this opinion; but they must not be so partially judged. Those who are constantly mixed with the world, and exposed to its allurements, are subject to a continual struggle against their passions, which they are more enabled to restrain, as temptation so rapidly succeeds temptation that one destroys the other—effacing it from their recollection

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before they have had time to mature their embryo guilt. But in our floating monasteries, where rigid discipline and active duties allow only the thoughts to ramble to that society which never has been intended to be abandoned, the passions are naturally impelled towards that world whose temptations are so much increased by long and unnatural seclusion.

In the mountain lake, whose waters are daily increasing, all is unruffled till their own weight has forced its boundaries, and the roaring cataract sweeps everything before it. Such is the licentious and impetuous behaviour of the sailor on shore. But on board he is a different being, and appears as if he were without sin and without guile. Let those, then, who turn away at his occasional intemperance be careful how they judge. They may "thank God that they are not as that publican," and yet be less justified when weighed in that balance where, although Justice eyes the beam, Mercy is permitted to stand by, and throw into the scale her thousand little grains to counterpoise the mass of guilt.

Religion in a sailor (I mean by the term a common seaman) is more of an active than a passive feeling. It does not consist in reflection or self-examination. It is in externals that his respect to the Deity is manifest. Witness the Sunday on board of a man-of-war; the care with which the decks are washed, the hauling taut and neat coiling down of the ropes, the studied cleanliness of person, most of which duties are performed on other days, but on this day are executed with an extra precision and attention on the part of the seamen, because it is Sunday. Then the quiet decorum voluntarily observed; the attention to Divine service, which would be a pattern to a congregation on shore; the little knots of men collected, in the afternoon, between the guns, listening to one who reads some serious book; or the solitary quartermaster poring over his thumb'd Testament as he communes with himself—all prove that sailors have a deep-rooted feeling of religion. I once knew a first lieutenant receive a severe rebuke from a ship's company. This officer, observing the men scattered listlessly about the fore-castle and waist of the frigate on a fine Sunday evening, ordered the fiddler up

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that they might dance. The ship's company thanked him for his kindness, but stated that they had not been accustomed to dance on that day, and requested that the music might be sent below.

The Sunday on board a man-of-war has another advantage over the Sabbath on shore: it is hallowed throughout. It commences with respect and reverence, and it ends with the same. There is no alehouse to resort to, where the men may become intoxicated; no allurements of the senses to disturb the calm repose of the mind, the practical veneration of the day, which bestows upon it a moral beauty.

It was on the evening of such a day of serenity, after the hammocks had been piped down and the watch mustered, that Captain M—— was standing on the gangway of the *Aspasia* in conversation with Macallan, the surgeon. It was almost a calm; the sails were not asleep with the light airs that occasionally distended them, but flapped against the lofty masts with the motion communicated to the vessel by the undulating wave. The moon, nearly at her full, was high in the heavens, steering for the zenith in all her beauty, without one envious cloud to obscure the refulgence of her beams, which were reflected upon the water in broad and wavering lines of silver. The blue wave was of a deeper blue—so clear and so transparent, that you fancied you could pierce through a fathomless perspective, and so refreshing, so void of all impurity, that it invited you to glide into its bosom.

"How clear the moon shines to-night; to-morrow, I think, will be full moon."

"It would be well," observed the surgeon in reply to the remark of the captain, "to request the officer of the watch not to permit the men to sleep on the upper deck. We shall have many of them moon-blind."

"I have often heard that effect of the moon in the tropics mentioned, but have never seen it. In what manner does it affect the eyes?"

"The moon can act but in one way, sir," replied Macallan—"by attraction. The men who are affected see perfectly well in broad daylight, but as soon as it is dusk their powers of vision are gone altogether. At the usual time at which

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the hammocks are piped down they will not be able to distinguish the numbers. I have had sixty men in one ship in the situation I have described."

"We ridicule the opinion of the ancients relative to the powers of this planet," observed the captain; "but at the same time I have often heard more ascribed to her influence than the world in general are inclined to credit. That she regulates the tides is, I believe, the only point upon which there is now no scepticism."

"There has been scepticism even upon that, sir. Did you ever read a work entitled 'Theory of the Tides'? I can, however, state some other points, from observation, in which the moon has power."

"Over lunatics, I presume?"

"Most certainly; and why not, therefore, over those who are rational? We observe the effect more clearly in the lunatic, because his mind is in a state of feverish excitement; but if the moon can act upon the diseased brain, it must also have power, although less perceptible, over the mind which is in health. I believe that there is an ebb and flow of power in our internal mechanism corresponding to the phases of the moon; I mean, that the blood flows more rapidly, and the powers of nature are more stimulated, at the flood and full than at the ebb and neap, when a reaction takes place in proportion to the previous acceleration. Dr. Mead has observed that, of those who are at the point of death, nine out of ten quit this world at the ebb of the tide. Does not this observation suggest the idea that Nature has relaxed her efforts during that period, after having been stimulated during the flood? Shakspeare, who was a true observer of Nature, has not omitted this circumstance; speaking of the death of Falstaff, Mrs. Quickly observes, 'It was just at the turn of the tide.'"

"Well, but, Mr. Macallan, laying aside hypothesis, what have you ascertained, from actual observation, besides that which we term moon-blindness?"

"The effect of the moon upon fish and other animal matter hung up in its rays at night. If under the half-deck, they would remain perfectly sweet and eatable; but if exposed to the moon's rays in the tropics, they will, in the course of one night, become putrid and unwholesome.



## THE KING'S OWN

They emit no smell, but when eaten will produce diarrhœa, almost as violent as if you had taken poison."

"I have heard that stated also by seamen," said the captain, "but have never witnessed it."

"A remarkable and corroborative instance occurred when I was in the bay of Annapolis," resumed the surgeon. "I was becalmed in a small vessel, and amused myself with fishing. I pulled up several herrings, but to my astonishment they were putrid and sodden an hour or two after they were dead. I observed the circumstance to one of the fishermen, who informed me that several hundred barrels, taken at a fishery a few miles off, had all been spoiled in the same manner. I asked the reason, and the answer was, that 'they had been spawned at the full of the moon.' How far the man was correct I know not; but he stated that the circumstance had occurred before, and was well known to the older fishermen."

"Very singular," replied Captain M——. "We are too apt to reject the whole because we have found a part to be erroneous. That the moon is not the Hecate formerly supposed, I believe; but she seems to have more power than is usually ascribed to her. Is that seven bells striking?"

"It is, sir; the time has slipped rapidly away. I shall wish you good-night."

"Good-night," replied Captain M——, who for some time after the departure of the surgeon continued leaning over the rail of the entering-port in silent contemplation of the glassy wave, until the working of his mind was expressed in the following apostrophe:—

"Yes—placid and beautiful as thou art, there is foul treachery in thy smile. Who knows but that one day thou mayest in thy fury demand as a victim the form which thou so peaceably reflectest? Ever-craving epicure! thou must be fed with the healthy and the brave. The gluttonous earth preys indiscriminately upon the diseased carcasses of age, infancy, and manhood; but thou must be more daintily supplied. Health and vigour; prime of life and joyous heart; high-beating pulse and energy of soul; active bodies and more active minds—such is the food in which thou delightest; and with such dainty fare wilt thou ever be

## THE KING'S OWN

supplied, until the Power that created thee, with the other elements, shall order thee to pass away."

The bell struck eight, and its sharp peals, followed by the hoarse summoning of the watch below by the boatswain's mates, disturbed his reverie, and Captain M—— descended to his cabin.

And now, reader, I shall finish this chapter. You may perhaps imagine that I have the scene before me, and am describing from Nature; if so, you are in error. I am seated in the after-cabin of a vessel, endowed with as liberal a share of motion as any in his Majesty's service; whilst I write I am holding on by the table, my legs entwined in the lashings underneath, and I can barely manage to keep my position before my manuscript. The sea is high, the gale fresh, the sky dirty, and threatening a continuance of what our transatlantic descendants would term a pretty-considerable-tarnation-strong blast of wind. The top-gallant-yards are on deck, the masts are struck, the guns double-breeched, and the bulwarks creaking and grinding in most detestable regularity of dissonance as the vessel scuds and lurches through a cross and heavy sea. The main-deck is afloat; and from the careless fitting of the half-ports at the dockyard, and neglect of caulking in the cants, my fore-cabin is in the same predicament. A bubbling brook changing its course, ebbing and flowing as it were with the rolling of the ship, is dashing with mimic fury against the trunks secured on each side of the cabin.

I have just been summoned from my task in consequence of one of the battens which secured my little library having given way to the immoderate weight of learning that pressed upon it; and as my books have been washed to and fro, I have snatched them from their first attempts at natation. Smith's "Wealth of Nations" I picked up 'first, not worth a fig; "Don Juan" I have just rescued from a second shipwreck, with no other Hey-day (Haidée) to console him than the melancholy one extracted from me with a deep sigh as I received his shattered frame. Here's Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," in a very melancholy plight indeed; and (what a fashionable watering-place my cabin has turned to!) here's Burke's "Peerage," with all the royal family and aristocracy of the kingdom, taking a dip, and a captain of a

## THE KING'S OWN

man-of-war, like another Sally Gunn, pulling them out. So you perceive my description has been all moonshine—

“My wishes have been fathers to my thoughts.”

My bones are sore with rocking. Horace says that he had a soul of brass who first ventured to sea; I think a body of iron very necessary to the outfit. My cot is swinging and jerking up to the beams, as if the lively scoundrel was some metamorphosed imp mocking at me. “Sarve you right—what did you ’list for?”—Very true—why did I?—Well, anxious as I am to close this chapter, and to close my eyes, I will tell you, reader, what it was that induced me to go to sea. It was not to escape the drudgery and confinement of a school, or the admonitions received at home. The battle of Trafalgar had been fought—I recollect the news being brought down by the dancing-master when I was at school; but although I knew that eighteen or twenty sail of the line had been captured, yet, never having seen a vessel larger than a merchant-ship at London Bridge, I had very imperfect ideas on the subject—except that it must have been a very glorious affair, as we had a whole holiday in consequence. But when I returned home, I witnessed the funeral procession of Lord Nelson; and as the triumphal car upon which his earthly remains were borne disappeared from my aching eye, I felt that death could have no terrors if followed by such a funeral; and I determined that I would be buried in the same manner. This is the fact; but I am not now exactly of the same opinion. I had no idea at that time that it was such a terrible roundabout way to St. Paul’s. Here I have been tossed about in every quarter of the globe for between twenty and five-and-twenty years, and the dome is almost as distant as ever.

I mean to put up with the family vault; but I should like very much to have engraved on my coffin—“Many years Commissioner,” or “Lord of the Admiralty,” or “Governor of Greenwich Hospital,” “Ambassador,” “Privy Councillor,” or, in fact, anything but Captain; for though acknowledged to be a good travelling name, it is a very insignificant title at the end of our journey. Moreover, as the author of “Pelham” says, “I wish somebody would adopt me.”

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER XXIII

When his pockets were lined, why, his life should be mended,  
The laws he had broken he'd never break more.

*Sea Song.*

ON his return to London, M'Elvina immediately repaired to the residence of his patron, that he might enter into the necessary explanations relative to the capture of the vessel and the circumstances which had produced his release from the penalties and imprisonment to which he had been subjected by his lawless career. Previous, however, to narrating the events which occurred upon his arrival, it will be advisable to offer some remarks relative to M'Elvina, which, when they have been suggested to the reader, will serve to remove much of the apparent inconsistency of his character. That a person who, from his earliest childhood, had been brought up to fraud and deceit should, of his own accord, and so suddenly, return to honesty, may at first appear problematical. But let it be remembered that M'Elvina was not in the situation of those who, having their choice of good and evil, had preferred the latter. From infancy he had been brought up to, and had heard every encomium upon, dishonesty, without having one friend to point out to him the advantages of pursuing another course. The same spirit of emulation which would have made him strenuous in the right path, urged him forward in his career of error. If, after his discharge from the Philanthropic School, he had had time to observe the advantages in practice of those maxims which had only been inculcated in theory, it is not improbable that he might have reformed; this, however, was prevented by the injudicious conduct of his master.

But although the principles which had been instilled were not sufficiently powerful, unassisted by reflection, to resist the force of habit, the germ, smothered as it was for the time, was not destroyed; and after M'Elvina's seven years' servitude in a profession remarkable for candour and sincerity, and in which he had neither temptation nor opportunity to

return to his evil courses, habit had been counteracted by habit. The tares and wheat were of equal growth. 'his is substantiated by the single fact of his inclination to be honest when he found the pocket-book. A confirmed rogue would never have thought of returning it, even if it had not been worth five shillings. It is true, if it had contained hundreds, in his distressed circumstances, that the temptation might have been too strong; but this remark by no means disproves the assertion, that he had the inclination to be honest. "There is a tide in the affairs of men," and it was on this decision between retaining or returning the pocket-book that depended the future misery or welfare of M'Elvina. Fortunately the sum was not sufficient to turn the nicely-balanced scale, and the generosity of old Hornblow confirmed the victory on the side of virtue. I do not mean to assert that, for some time subsequent to this transaction, M'Elvina was influenced by a religious, or even a moral feeling. It was rather by interested motives that he was convinced; but convinced he was; and whether he was proud of his return to comparative virtue, or found it necessary to refresh his memory, his constant injunctions to others to be honest (upon the same principle that a man who tells a story repeatedly eventually believes it to be true) assisted to keep him steadfast in his good resolutions.

Upon the other points of his character it will be unnecessary to dilate. For his gentlemanly appearance and address he was indebted to Nature, who does not always choose to acknowledge the claims which aristocracy thinks proper to assert, and occasionally mocks the idea by bestowing graces on a cottager which might be envied by the inhabitants of a palace. Of M'Elvina it may with justice be asserted that his faults were those of education—his courage, generosity, and many good qualities were his own.

M'Elvina, who knew exactly at what hour of the day his patron would be abroad, took the precaution of not going to the house until the time at which he would be certain to find Susan, as usual, in the little parlour, alone, and occupied with her needle or her book. The street-door had just been opened by the maid to receive some articles of domestic use which a tradesman had sent home; and M'Elvina, putting his finger to his lips to ensure the silence of the girl, who

## THE KING'S OWN

would have run to communicate the welcome intelligence of his arrival, stepped past her into the passage, and found the door of the little parlour. Gently admitting himself, he discovered Susan, whom he had not disturbed, sitting opposite to the window with her back towards him. He crept in softly behind her chair. She was in deep thought; one hand rested on her cheek, and the other held the pen with which she had been arranging the accounts of the former week, to submit them, as usual, to her father on the Monday evening. Of whom and what she was thinking was, however, soon manifested to M'Elvina; for she commenced scribbling and drawing with her pen on the blotting-paper before her, until she at last wrote several times, as if she were practising to see how it would look as a signature,

"SUSAN M'ELVINA."

"SUSAN M'ELVINA."

"SUSAN M'ELVINA."

Although delighted at this proof that he was occupying her thoughts, M'Elvina had the delicacy to retire unperceived, and Susan, as if recollecting herself, slightly coloured as she twisted up the paper and threw it under the grate; in doing which she perceived M'Elvina, who still remained at the door. A cry of surprise, a deep blush of pleasure over her pale face, and a hand frankly extended, which M'Elvina could with difficulty resist the impulse to raise to his lips, were followed up by the hasty interrogation of—"Why, your arm is in a sling? You did not say that you were hurt when you wrote from Plymouth?"

"It was not worth mentioning, Susan—it's almost well; but tell me, how did your father bear the loss of the vessel?"

"Oh, pretty well! But, Captain M'Elvina, you could not have done me a greater favour, or my father a greater kindness. He has now wound up his affairs, and intends to retire from all speculation. He has purchased a house in the country, and I hope, when we go there, that I shall be more happy, and have better health than I have had of late."

"And what is to become of me?" observed M'Elvina gravely.

"Oh, I don't know; you are the best judge of that."



## THE KING'S OWN

"Well, then, I will confess to you, Susan, that I am just as well pleased that all this has taken place as you are; for I am not sorry to give up a profession respecting which, between ourselves, I have lately had many scruples of conscience. I have not saved much, it is true; but I have enough to live upon, as long as I have no one to take care of except myself."

"You raise yourself in my opinion by saying so," replied Susan; "although it is painful to me to condemn a practice which impeaches my father. Your courage and talents may be better applied. Thank God that it is all over."

✱ "But, Susan, you said that you hoped to have better health. Have you not been well?"

"Not very ill," replied Susan, "but I have had a good deal of anxiety. The loss of the vessel—your capture—has affected my father, and of course has worried me."

The discourse was now interrupted by old Hornblow, who had returned home to his dinner. He received M'Elvina in the most friendly manner, and they sat down to table.

After dinner, M'Elvina entered into a minute detail of all that had occurred, and, as far as he was concerned, with a modesty which enhanced his meritorious conduct.

Susan listened to the narrative with intense interest; and as soon as it was over retired to her room, leaving old Hornblow and M'Elvina over their bottle.

"Well, M'Elvina, what do you mean to do with yourself?" said the old man. "You know that Susan has at last persuaded me into retiring from business. I have just concluded the purchase of a little property near the seaside, about seven miles from the village of —, in Norfolk—it adjoins the great Rainscourt estate. You know that part of the coast."

"Very well, sir; there is a famous landing-place there, on the Rainscourt estate. It was formerly the property of Admiral De Courcy."

"Ah! we don't mean to smuggle any more, so that's no use. I should not have known that it was near the Rainscourt property, only they inserted it in the particulars of sale as an advantage; though I confess I do not see any particular advantage in a poor man living too near a rich one. But answer my question—what are you going to do with yourself? If I can assist you, M'Elvina, I will."

## THE KING'S OWN

"I do not intend to go to sea any more."

"No! what then? I suppose you would like to marry, and settle on shore? Well, if I can assist you, M'Elvina, I will."

"You could, indeed, assist me there, sir."

"Oh! Susan, I suppose. Nay, don't colour up; I've seen it long enough, and if I had not meant that it should be so, I should have put an end to it before. You are an honest man, M'Elvina, and I know nobody to whom I would give my girl sooner than to you."

"You have, indeed, removed a weight from my mind, sir, and I hardly know how to express my thanks to you for your good wishes; but I have yet to obtain your daughter's consent."

"I know you have; you cannot expect that she will anticipate your wishes as I have done. But as I wish this business to be decided at once, I shall send her down to you, and I'll take a walk in the meantime. All I can say is, that if she says she has no mind to you, don't you believe her, for I know better."

"Susan!" said old Hornblow, going to the door.

"Yes, father."

"Come down, my dear, and stay with Captain M'Elvina. I am obliged to go out."

Old Hornblow reached down his hat, put on his spencer, and departed; while Susan, whose heart told her that so unusual a movement on her father's part was not without some good reason, descended to the parlour with a quickened pulse.

"Susan!" said M'Elvina, who had risen from his chair to receive her as soon as he heard her footsteps, "I have much to say to you, and I must be as brief as I can, for my mind is in too agitated a state to bear with much temporising. Do me the favour to take a chair, and listen while I make you acquainted with what you do not know."

Susan trembled, and the colour flew from her cheeks as she sat down on the chair which M'Elvina handed to her.

"Your father, Susan, took me by the hand at the time that I was in great distress, in consequence of my having pleased him by an act of common honesty. You know how kind and considerate a patron he has been to me since, and

## THE KING'S OWN

I have now been in his employ some years. This evening he has overpowered me with a weight of gratitude, by allowing me to aspire to that which I most covet on earth, and has consented to my robbing him, if I can, of his greatest treasure. You cannot mistake what I mean. But previous to my requesting an answer on a point in which my future happiness is involved, I have an act of justice to perform towards you, and of conscience towards myself, which must be fulfilled. It is to be candid, and not allow you to be entrapped into an alliance with a person of whose life you, at present, know but the fair side.

"First, let me state to you, Susan, that my parentage is as obscure as it well can be; and secondly, that the early part of my life was as vicious. I may, indeed, extenuate it when I enter into an explanation, and with great justice; but I have now only stated the facts generally. If you wish me to enter into particulars, much as I shall blush at the exposure, and painful as the task assigned will be, I shall not refuse, even at the risk of losing all I covet by the confession; for much as my happiness is at stake, I have too sincere a regard for you to allow you to contract any engagement with me without making this candid avowal. Now, Susan, answer me frankly—whether, in the first place, you wish me to discover the particulars of my early life; in the next place (if you decline hearing them), whether after this general avowal you will listen to any solicitations on my part to induce you to unite your future destiny with mine?"

"Captain M'Elvina, I thank you for your candour," replied Susan, "and will imitate you in my answer. Your obscure parentage cannot be a matter of consideration to one who has no descent to boast of. That you have not always been leading a creditable life, I am sorry for—more sorry because I am sure it must be a source of repentance and mortification to you; but I have not an idle curiosity to wish you to impart that which would not tend to my happiness to divulge. I did once hear an old gentlewoman, who had been conversant with the world, declare that if every man was obliged to confess the secrets of his life before marriage, few young women would be persuaded to go up to the altar. I hope it is not true; but whether it is or not, it does not

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exactly bear upon the subject in agitation. I again thank you for your candour, and disclaim all wish to know any further. I believe I have now answered your question."

"Not yet, Susan; you have not yet answered the latter part of it."

"What was it? I don't recollect."

"It was," said M'Elvina, picking up the piece of twisted paper which Susan had thrown under the grate, "whether you would listen to my entreaties to sign your name in future as on this paper?"

"Oh, M'Elvina," cried Susan; "how unfair, how ungenerous! Now I detest you!"

"I'll not believe that. I have your own handwriting to the contrary, and I'll appeal to your father."

"Nay, rather than that, you have set me an example of candour, and shall profit by it. Promise me, M'Elvina, always to treat me as you have this day, and here is my hand."

"Who would not be honest to be so rewarded?" replied M'Elvina, as he embraced the blushing girl.

"Ah, all's right, I perceive," cried old Hornblow, who had opened the door unperceived. "Come, my children, take my blessing; long may you live happy and united."

## CHAPTER XXIV

He was a shrewd philosopher,  
And had read every text and gloss over,  
Whatever sceptic could inquire for,  
For every *why* he had a *wherefore*.  
He could reduce all things to acts,  
And knew their nature by abstracts.

*Hudibras.*

CAPTAIN M—— was not unmindful of the promise which he had made to M'Elvina relative to our hero; and when he returned to the ship he sent for Macallan, the surgeon, and requested as a personal favour that he would superintend Willy's education and direct his studies.

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Macallan was too partial to Captain M—— to refuse, and fortunately had imbibed a strong regard for Willy, whose romantic history, early courage, and amiability of disposition had made him a general favourite. Macallan, therefore, willingly undertook the tuition of a boy who combined energy of mind with docility of disposition and sweetness of temper. There could not have been selected a person better qualified than the surgeon for imparting that general knowledge so valuable in after-life, and under his guidance Willy soon proved that strong intellectual powers were among the other advantages which he had received from Nature.

The *Aspasia* flew before the trade-winds, and in a few weeks arrived at Barbadoes, where Captain M—— found orders left by the admiral of the station, directing him to survey a dangerous reef of rocks to the northward of Porto Rico, and to continue to cruise for some weeks in that quarter after the service had been performed. In three days the frigate was revictualled and watered; and the officers had barely time to have their sea arrangements completed, before the frigate again expanded her canvas to a favourable breeze. In a few hours the island was left so far astern as to appear like the blue mist which so often deceives the expectant scanner of the horizon.

"You Billy Pitt! is all my linen come on board?"

"Yes, sar," replied Billy, who was in Courtenay's cabin; "I make bill out; just now cast up multerpication of whole."

"I'm afraid you very often use multiplication in your addition, Mr. Billy."

"True bill, sar," replied Billy, coming out of the cabin, and handing a paper to Courtenay.

"What's this?—nineteen tarts! Why, you black thief, I never had any tarts."

"Please let me see, sar," said Billy, peering over his shoulder. "Yes, sar, all right—I count 'em. Tell washer-woman put plenty of tarch in collar."

"Shirts, you nigger!—why don't you learn to spell with that dictionary of yours?"

"Know how to spell very well, sar," replied Billy haughtily; "that my way spell 'tarts.'"

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“ ‘Fourteen tockin, seventeen toul.’—You do know how to spell to a T.”

“Massa Courtenay, doctor not write same way you write.”

“Well, Mr. Billy.”

“You not write same way me—ebery gentleman write different hand. Now, if ebery gentleman write his own way, why not ebery gentleman spell his own way? Dat my way to spell, sar,” continued Billy, very much affronted.

“I can’t argue with you now, Mr. Billy there’s one bell after four striking, and I have hardly had a glass of wine, from your bothering me. Upon my soul, it’s excessively annoying.”

“One bell, Mr. Courtenay!” cried Jerry at the gun-room door; “Mr. Price will thank you to relieve him.”

“I say, Mr. Prose,” continued Jerry, as he passed through the steerage to return on deck, “I’ll just trouble you to hand your carcass up as soon as convenient.”

“Directly, Jerry—I—will—but my tea—is so hot.”

“Well then, leave it, and I’ll drink it for you,” replied Jerry, ascending the ladder.

“Well, Mr. G——, did you tell Mr. Courtenay?” inquired Price.

“Yes, sir,” replied Jerry.

“What did he say?”

“He said, ‘Pass the bottle, sir,’ ” replied Jerry, touching his hat, and not changing a muscle of his countenance, although delighted with the vexation that appeared in that of the tired lieutenant as he walked away forward.

For two or three days the frigate sailed between the islands, which reared their lofty crests abruptly from the ocean like the embattlements of some vast castle which had been submerged to the water’s edge. Her progress was slow, as she was only indebted to the land or sea breezes as they alternately blew, and was becalmed at the close of the day, during the pause between their relieving each other from their never-ceasing duty. Such was the situation of the *Aspasia* on the evening of the third day. The scene was one of those splendid panoramas which are only to be gazed upon in tropical climes. The sun was near setting; and as he passed through the horizontal streaks of vapour, fringed their narrow edges with a blaze of glory



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strongly in contrast with the deep blue of the zenith, reflected by the still wave in every quarter, except where the descending orb poured down his volume of rays, which changed the sea into an element of molten gold. The frigate was lying motionless in the narrow channel between two of the islands, the high mountains of which, in deep and solemn shade, were reflected in lengthened shadows, extending to the vessel's sides, and looking downwards you beheld the "mountains bowed." Many of the officers were standing abaft admiring the beauty of the scene, but not giving vent to their feelings from an inward consciousness of inability to do justice to it in their expressions.

Macallan first broke the silence. "Who would imagine, Courtenay, that ere yonder sun shall rise again a hurricane may exhaust its rage upon a spot so calm, so beautiful as this, where all now seems to whisper peace?"

The remark was followed by a noise like that proceeding from a distant gun. "Is it pace you mane, doctor?" said one of the midshipmen, from the sister kingdom. "By the powers, there's 'war to the knife' already. Look," continued he, pointing with his finger in a direction under the land, "there's a battle between the whale and the thrasher."

The remark of the midshipman was correct, and the whole party congregated on the taffrail to witness the struggle which had already commenced. The blows of the thrasher, a large fish of the same species as the whale, given with incredible force and noise on the back of the whale, were now answered by his more unwieldy antagonist, who lashed the sea with fury in his attempts to retaliate upon his more active assailant; and while the contention lasted, the water was in a foam.

In a few minutes the whale plunged and disappeared.

"He has had enough of it," observed the master, "but the thrasher will not let him off so easily. He must come up to breathe directly, and you'll find the thrasher yard-arm and yard-arm with him again."

As the master observed, the whale soon reappeared; and the thrasher, who had closely pursued him, as if determined to make up for lost time, threw himself out of the water and came down upon the whale, striking him with tremendous

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force upon the shoulder. The whale plunged so perpendicularly that his broad tail was many feet upraised in the air, and the persecuted animal was seen no more.

"That last broadside settled him," said Courtenay.

"Sunk him too, I think," cried Jerry.

"Strange," observed Courtenay, addressing Macallan, "that there should be such an antipathy between the animals. The West Indians assert, that at the same time the thrasher attacks him above, the sword-fish pierces him underneath—if so, it must be very annoying."

"I have heard the same story, but have never myself seen the sword-fish," replied Macallan; "it is, however, very possible, as there is no animal in the creation that has so many enemies as the whale."

"A tax on greatness," observed Jerry; "I'm glad it goes by bulk. Mr. Macallan," continued he, "you're a philosopher, and I have heard you argue that whatever is, is right—will you explain to my consummate ignorance, upon what just grounds the thrasher attacks that unoffending mass of blubber?"

"I'll explain it to you," said Courtenay, laughing. "The whale, who has just come from the northward, finds himself in very comfortable quarters here, and has no wish to heave up his anchor and proceed on his voyage round Cape Horn. The thrasher is the port-admiral of the station, and his blows are so many guns to enforce his orders to sail forthwith."

"Thank you, sir," answered Jerry sarcastically, "for your very ingenious explanation; but I do not see why his guns should be shotted. Perhaps Mr. Macallan will now oblige me by his ideas on the subject."

"How far these islands may be the Capua to the whale, which Mr. Courtenay presumes, I cannot say," answered the surgeon pompously; "but I have observed that all the cetaceous tribe are very much annoyed by vermin which adhere to their skins. You often see the porpoises and smaller fish of this class throw themselves into the air, and fall flat on the water, to detach the barnacles and other parasitical insects which distress them. May it not be that the whale, being so enormous an animal, and not able to employ the same means of relief, receives it from the blows of the thrasher?"

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"Bravo, doctor! Why, then, the thrasher may be considered as a medical attendant to the whale; and from the specimen we have witnessed of his humanity, a naval practitioner, I have no doubt," added Jerry.

"Very well, Mr. Jerry; if ever you come under my hands, you shall smart for that."

"Very little chance, doctor; I'm such a miserable object, that even disease passes by me with contempt. If I ever am in your list, I presume it will be for a case of plethora," replied Jerry, spanning his thin waist.

"Young gentlemen, get down directly. What are you all doing there on the taffrail?" bawled out the first lieutenant, who had just come up the ladder.

"We've been looking at a sea-bully," said Jerry, in a tone of voice sufficiently loud to excite the merriment of those about him without being heard by the first lieutenant.

"What's the joke?" observed Mr. Bully, coming aft as the midshipmen were dispersing.

"Some of Mr. J——'s nonsense," replied the surgeon.

This answer not being satisfactory, the first lieutenant took it for granted, as people usually do, that the laugh was against himself, and his choler was raised against the offending party.

"Mr. J——! Ay, that young man thinks of anything but his duty. There he is, playing with the captain's dog; and his watch, I'll answer for it, or he would not be on deck. Mr. J——," continued the first lieutenant to Jerry, who was walking up and down to leeward, followed by a large Newfoundland dog, "is it your watch?"

"Yes, sir," replied Jerry, touching his hat.

"Then why are you skylarking with that dog?"

"I am not skylarking with the dog, sir. He follows me up and down. I believe he takes me for a bone."

"I am not surprised at it," replied the first lieutenant, laughing.

The surgeon, who remained abaft, was now accosted by Willy, who had been amusing himself leaning over the side of a boat which had been lowered down by the first lieutenant to examine the staving of the masts, and catching in a tin pot the various minute objects of natural history which passed by as the frigate glided slowly along.

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"What shell is this, Mr. Macallan, which I have picked up? It floated on the surface of the water by means of these air-bladders which are attached to it."

"That shell, Willy," replied Macallan, who, mounting his favourite hobby, immediately spouted his pompous truths, "is called by naturalists the *Lanthina fragilis*, perhaps the weakest and most delicate in its texture which exists, and yet the only one\* which ventures to contend with the stormy ocean. The varieties of the nautili have the same property of floating on the surface of the water, but they seldom are found many miles from land. They are only coasters in comparison with this adventurous little navigator, which alone braves the Atlantic, and floats about in the same fathomless deep which is ranged by the devouring shark and lashed by the stupendous whale. I have picked up these little sailors nearly one thousand miles from the land. Yet observe, it is his security; his tenement, of such thin texture to enable him to float with greater ease, would not be able to encounter the rippling of the wave upon the smoothest beach."

"What use are they of?"

"Of no direct use that I know of, William; but if it has no other use than to induce you to reflect a little, it has not been made in vain. All created things are not applicable to the wants or the enjoyment of man; but their examination will always tend to his improvement. When you analyse this little creature in its domicile, and see how wonderfully it is provided with all means necessary for its existence; when you compare it with the thousand varieties upon the beach, in all of which you will perceive the same Master hand visible, the same attention in providing for their wants, the same minute and endless beauty of colour and of form—you cannot but acknowledge the vastness and the magnificence of the Maker. In the same manner, the flowers and shrubs, which embellish, as they cover the earth, are not all so much for use as they are for ornament. What human ingenuity can approach to the perfection of the meanest effort of the Almighty hand? Has it not been pointed out in the

\* I am aware that there are two or three other pelagic shells, but at the time of this narrative they were not known.

## THE KING'S OWN

Scriptures, 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' Never debate in your mind, Willy, of what use are these things which God has made ; for of what use, then, is man, the most endowed and the most perverse of all creation, except to show the goodness and the forbearance of the Almighty ? You may hereafter be inclined to debate why noxious reptiles and ferocious beasts, that not only are useless to man, but a source of dread and of danger, have been created. They have their inheritance upon earth as well as man, and combine with the rest of animated nature to show the power, and the wisdom, and the endless variety of the Creator. It is true that all animals were made for our use ; but recollect, that when man fell from his perfect state, it was declared, 'In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread.' Are trackless forests and yet unexplored regions to remain without living creatures to enjoy them until they shall be required by man ? And is man, in his fallen state, to possess all the earth and its advantages, without labour—without fulfilling his destiny ? No. Ferocious and noxious animals disappear only before cultivation. It is part of the labour to which he has been sentenced, that he should rend them out as the 'thistle and the thorn ;' or drive them to those regions which are not yet required by him, and of which they may continue to have possession undisturbed."

Such was the language of Macallan to our hero, whose thirst for knowledge constantly made fresh demands upon the surgeon's fund of information ; and pedantic as his language may appear, it contained important truths, which were treasured up by the retentive memory of his pupil.

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER XXV

How frail, how cowardly is woman's mind !  
Yet when strong jealousy inflames the soul,  
The weak will roar, and calms to tempests roll.

*LEE'S Rival Queens.*

**B**UT we must now follow up the motions of Mr. Rainscourt, who quitted the castle, and travelling with great diligence, once more trod the pavement of the metropolis, which he had quitted in equal haste but under very different circumstances. The news of his good fortune had preceded him, and he received all that homage which is invariably shown to a man who has many creditors and the means of satisfying all their demands. As he had prophesied, the little gentleman in black was as obsequious as could be desired, and threw out many indirect hints of the pleasure he should have in superintending Mr. Rainscourt's future arrangements; and by way of reinstating himself in his good graces, acquainted him with a plan for reducing the amount of the demands that were made upon him. Rainscourt, who never forgave, so far acceded to the lawyer's wishes as to permit him to take that part of the arrangements into his hands; and after Mr J—— had succeeded in bringing the usurers to reasonable terms—when all had been duly signed and sealed, not only were his services declined for the future, but the servants were desired to show him the street-door.

As his wife had remarked, Rainscourt found no difficulty in making friends of all sorts, and of both sexes; and he had launched into a routine of gaiety and dissipation, in which he continued for several months, without allowing his wife and daughter to interrupt his amusements, or to enter his thoughts. He had enclosed an order upon the banker at —— soon after his arrival in London, and he considered that he had done all that was requisite. Such was not, however, the opinion of his wife—to be immured in a lonely castle in Ireland was neither her intention nor her taste. Finding that repeated letters were un-



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answered, in which she requested permission to join him, and pointed out the necessity that Emily, who was now nearly twelve years old, should have the advantages of tuition which his fortune could command, she packed up a slender wardrobe, and in a week arrived in London with Emily, and drove up to the door of the hotel to which Rainscourt had directed that his letters should be addressed.

Rainscourt was not at home when she arrived. Announcing herself as his wife, she was shown upstairs into his apartments, a minute survey of which, with their contents, was immediately made; and the notes and letters which were carelessly strewed upon the tables, and all of which she took the liberty to peruse, had the effect of throwing Mrs. Rainscourt into a transport of jealousy and indignation. The minutes appeared hours, and the hours months, until he made his appearance, which he at last did, accompanied by two fashionable *roués* with whom he associated.

The waiters, who happened not to be in the way as he ascended the stairs, had not announced to him the arrival of his wife, who was sitting on the sofa in her bonnet and shawl, one hand full of notes and letters, the superscriptions of which were evidently in a female hand, and the other holding her handkerchief, as if prepared for a scene. One leg was crossed over the other, and the foot of the one that was above worked in the air up and down with the force of a piston of a steam-engine, indicative of the propelling power within, when Rainscourt, whose voice was heard all the way upstairs, arrived at the landing-place, and in answer to a question of one of his companions replied—

“Go and see her! Not I; I’m quite tired of her. By Jove, I’d as soon see my wife;” and as he finished the sentence, entered the apartment, where the unexpected appearance of Mrs. Rainscourt made him involuntarily exclaim, “Talk of the devil——”

“And she appears, sir,” replied the lady, rising, and making a profound courtesy.

“Pooh, my dear,” replied Rainscourt, embarrassed and unwilling that a scene should take place before his companions, “I was only joking.”

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"Good morning, Rainscourt," said one of his friends; "I'm afraid that I shall be *de trop*."

"And I'm off too, my dear fellow, for there's no saying how the joke may be taken," added the other, following his companion out of the room.

Emily ran up to her father and took his hand; and Rainscourt, who was as much attached to his daughter as his selfish character would permit, kissed her forehead. Both parties were for a short time silent. Both preferred to await the attack rather than commence it; but in a trial of forbearance of this description, it may easily be supposed that the gentleman gained the victory. Mrs. Rainscourt waited until she found that she must either give vent to her feelings by words, or that her whole frame would explode; and the action commenced on her side with a shower of tears, which ended in violent hysterics. The first were unheeded by her husband, who always considered them as a kind of scaling her guns previous to an engagement; but the hysterics rather baffled him. In his own house, he would have rung for the servants and left them to repair damages; but at an hotel, an *éclat* was to be avoided, if possible.

"Emily, my dear, go to your mother; you know how to help her."

"No, I do not, papa," said the child, crying; "but Norah used to open her hands."

Rainscourt's eyes were naturally directed to the fingers of his wife, in which he perceived a collection of notes and letters. He thought it might be advisable to open her hand, if it were only to recover these out of her possession. What affection would not have induced him to do, interest accomplished. He advanced to the sofa, and attempted to open her clenched hands; but whether Mrs. Rainscourt's hysterics were only feigned, or of such violence as to defy the strength of her husband, all his efforts to extract the letters proved ineffectual, and after several unavailing attempts he desisted from his exertions. ➤

"What else is good for her, Emily?"

"Water, papa, thrown in her face; shall I ring for some?"

"No, my dear; is there nothing else we can do?"

"Oh yes, papa, unlace her stays."

Rainscourt, who was not very expert as a lady's maid,

## THE KING'S OWN

had some difficulty in arriving at the stays through the folds of the gown, *et cetera*, the more so as Mrs. Rainscourt was very violent in her movements, and he was not a little irritated by sundry pricks which he received from those indispensable articles of dress which the fair sex are necessitated to use, pointing out to us that there are no roses without thorns. When he did arrive at the desired encasement, he was just as much puzzled to find an end to what appeared, like the Gordian knot, to have neither beginning nor end. Giving way to the natural impatience of his temper, he seized a penknife from the table, to divide it à l'*Alexandre*. Unfortunately, in his hurry, instead of inserting the knife on the inside of the lace, so as to cut *to* him, he cut down upon it, and not meeting with the resistance which he expected, the point of the knife entered with no trifling force into the back of Mrs. Rainscourt, who to his astonishment immediately started on her legs, crying, "Would you murder me, Mr. Rainscourt?—help, help!"

"It was quite accidental, my dear," said Rainscourt, in a soothing tone, for he was afraid of her bringing the whole house about her ears. "I really am quite shocked at my own awkwardness."

"It quite recovered you, though, mamma," observed Emily, with great simplicity, and for which remark, to her astonishment, she was saluted with a smart box on the ear.

"Why should you be shocked, Mr. Rainscourt?" said the lady, who, as her daughter had remarked, seemed wonderfully recovered from the phle-*back*-omy which had been administered—"why should you be shocked at stabbing me in the back? Have I not wherewithal in my hand to stab me a thousand times in the heart? Look at these letters, all of which I have read! You had, indeed, reason to leave me in Galway; but I will submit to it no longer. Mr. Rainscourt, I insist upon an immediate separation."

"Why should we quarrel, then, my dear, when we are both of one mind? Now do me the favour to sit down and talk the matter over quietly. What is it that you require?"

"First, then, Mr. Rainscourt, an acknowledgment on your part that I am a most injured and most ill-treated woman."

"Granted, my dear, if that will add to your happiness; I certainly have never known your value."

## THE KING'S OWN

"Don't sneer, sir, if you please. Secondly, a handsome allowance, commensurate with your fortune."

"Granted, with pleasure, Mrs. Rainscourt."

"Thirdly, Mr. Rainscourt, an extra allowance for the education and expenses of my daughter, who will remain under my care."

"Granted also."

"Further, Mr. Rainscourt, to keep up appearances, I wish one of the mansions on your different estates in England to be appropriated for our use. Your daughter ought to be known, and reside on the property of which she is the future heiress."

"A reasonable demand, which I accede to. Is there anything further?"

"Nothing of moment; but, for Emily's sake, I should wish that you should pay us an occasional visit, and, generally speaking, keep up appearances before the world."

"That I shall be most happy to do, my dear, and shall always speak of you as I feel, with respect and esteem. Is there anything more, Mrs. Rainscourt?"

"There is not; but I believe that if I had been ten times more exorbitant in my demands," replied the lady, with pique, "that you would have granted them—for the pleasure of getting rid of me."

"I would indeed, my dear," replied Rainscourt; "you may command me in anything, except my own person."

"I require no other partition, sir, than that of your fortune."

"And of that, my dear, you shall, as I have declared, have a liberal share. So now, Mrs. Rainscourt, I think we can have no further occasion for disagreement. The property in Norfolk, where Admiral De Courcy resided, is a beautiful spot, and I request you will consider it as your headquarters. Of course, you will be your own mistress when you feel inclined to change the scene. And now, as all may be considered as settled, let us shake hands, and henceforward be good friends."

Mrs. Rainscourt gave her hand and sealed the new contract, but ill-treated as she had been—at variance with her husband for years—and now convinced that she had been outraged in the tenderest point, still her heart leaned towards the father of her child. The hand that now was extended in

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earnest of future separation, reminded her of the day when she had offered it in pledge of future fidelity and love, and had listened with rapture to his reciprocal obligation. She covered her face with her handkerchief, which was soon moistened with her tears.

Such is woman ! To the last moment she cherishes her love, pure as an emanation from the Deity. In the happy days of confidence and truth, it sheds a halo round her existence ; in those of sorrow and desertion, memory, guided by its resistless power, like the gnomon of the dial, marks but those hours which were sunny and serene.

However, Mrs. Rainscourt soon found out that an unlimited credit upon the banker was no bad substitute for a worthless husband ; and assisted by her pride, she enjoyed more real happiness and peace of mind than she had done for many years. During her stay in London, Rainscourt occasionally paid his respects, behaved with great kindness and propriety, and appeared not a little proud of the expanding beauty of his daughter. Mrs. Rainscourt not only recovered her spirits, but her personal attractions ; and their numerous acquaintance wondered what could possess Mr. Rainscourt to be indifferent to so lively and so charming a woman. In a few weeks the mansion was ready to receive them, and Mrs. Rainscourt, with Emily and a numerous establishment, quitted the metropolis to take up their abode in it for the ensuing summer.

## CHAPTER XXVI

*Pericles.* That's your superstition.

*Sailor.* Pardon us, sir. With us at sea it still hath been observed, and we are strong in earnest.—SHAKSPEARE.

THE weather was fine and the water smooth on the morning when the *Aspasia* arrived at the reef which, although well known to exist, had been very incorrectly laid down ; and Captain M—— thought it advisable to drop his anchor in preference to lying off and on so near to dangers which might extend much farther than he was aware. The frigate

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was, therefore, brought up in eighteen fathoms, about two miles from that part of the reef which discovered itself above water.

The captain and master undertook the survey; but any officers who volunteered their assistance, or midshipmen who wished to profit by the opportunity of gaining a practical knowledge of maritime surveying, were permitted to join the party, another boat having been lowered down for their accommodation. Hector, the captain's Newfoundland dog, was flying about the decks mad with delight, as he always was when a boat was lowered down, as he anticipated the pleasure of a swim. Captain M——, who had breakfasted, and whose boat was manned alongside, came on deck; when the dog fawning on him, he desired that his broad leather collar, with the ship's name in large brass letters riveted round it, should be taken off, that it might not be injured by the salt water. Jerry, who was on deck, and received the order, asked the captain for the key of the padlock which secured it, and Captain M—— handed him his bunch of keys, to which it had been affixed, and desiring him to take the collar off and return the keys to him, descended again to his cabin.

Jerry soon dispossessed the dog of his collar, and ripe for mischief, went down to the midshipmen's berth, where he found Prose alone, the rest being all on deck or scattered about the ship. Prose was the person that he wanted, being the only one upon whom he could venture a practical joke without incurring more risk than was agreeable. Jerry commenced by fixing the collar round his own neck, and said, "I wish I could get promotion. Now, if the situation of captain's dog was only vacant, I should like the rating amazingly. I should soon get fat then, and I think I should look well up in this collar."

"Why, Jerry, that collar certainly does look as if it was made for you; it's rather ornamental, I do declare."

"I wish I had a glass to see how it looks. I would try it on you, Prose, but you've such a bull neck that it wouldn't go half round it."

"Bull neck, Jerry—why, I'll lay you sixpence that my neck's almost as small as yours; and I'll lay you a shilling that the collar will go round my neck."



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"Done; now let's see—recollect the staple must go into the hole, or you lose," said Jerry, fixing the collar round Prose's neck, and pretending that the staple was not into the hole of the collar until he had inserted the padlock, turned and taken out the key.

"Well, I do declare I've lost, Prose. I must go and get you the shilling," continued Jerry, making his escape out of the berth, and leaving Prose with the collar so tight under his chin that he could scarcely open his mouth. Jerry arrived on the quarter-deck just as the captain was stepping into the boat, and he went up to him, and touching his hat, presented him with the bunch of keys.

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Jerry; I had forgotten them," said Captain M——, descending the side and shoving off.

"Whose clothes are these hanging on the davit-guys?" said Mr. Bully, who had given order that no clothes were to be drying after eight o'clock in the morning.

"I believe that they are Mr. Prose's, sir, though I am not sure," answered Jerry, who knew very well that they were not, but wished that Prose should be sent for.

"Quartermaster, tell Mr. Prose to come up to me directly."

Jerry immediately ran down to the berth.

"Well now, Jerry, this is too bad, I do declare. Come, take it off again, that's a good fellow."

"Mr. Prose," said the quartermaster, "the first lieutenant wants you on deck directly."

"There now, Jerry, what a mess I might have been in! Where's the key?"

"I have not got it," replied Jerry; "the captain saw me on the quarter-deck, and took the bunch of keys away with him."

"What! is the captain gone away? I do declare, now, this is too bad," cried Prose, in a rage.

"Too bad!—why, man, don't be angry—it's a distinction. Between me and the first lieutenant, you are created a knight of the *Grand Cross*. I gave you the *collar*, and he has given you the *order*, which I recommend you to comply with, without you wish further elevation to the *mast-head*."

"Mr. Prose, the first lieutenant wants you immediately,"

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said the quartermaster, who had been despatched to him again.

"Why, how can I go up with a dog's collar round my neck?"

"I'm sorry, very sorry indeed, Prose. Never mind—say it was me."

"Say it was you! Why, so it was you. I'd better say that I'm sick."

"Yes, that will do. What shall your complaint be?—a *lock-jaw*? I'll go up and tell Mr. Bully—shall I?"

"Do—tell him I'm not well."

Jerry went up accordingly. "Mr. Prose is not well, sir—he has a sort of *lock-jaw*."

"I wish to God you had the same complaint, sir," replied the first lieutenant, who owed him one. "Macallan, is Mr. Prose ill?"

"Not that I know of; he has not applied to me. I'll go down and see him before I go on shore."

Macallan came up laughing, but he recovered his seriousness before Bully perceived it.

"Well, doctor?"

"Mr. Prose is certainly not very fit to come on deck in his present state," said Macallan, who then descended the side, and the boat, which had been waiting for him, shoved off. But this time Jerry was caught in his own trap.

"Mr. J——, where is the dog's collar?—it must be oiled and cleaned," said the first lieutenant.

"Shall I give it to the armourer, sir?" replied Jerry.

"No, bring it up to me."

Jerry went down, and returned in a few minutes. "I cannot find it, sir; I left it in the berth when I came on deck."

"That's just like your usual carelessness, Mr. J——. Now go up to the mast-head, and stay there till I call you down."

Jerry, who did not like the turn which the joke had taken, moved up with a very reluctant step—at the rate of about one ratline in ten seconds.

"Come, sir, what are you about?—start up."

"I'm no *up-start*, sir," replied Jerry to the first lieutenant—a sarcasm which hit so hard that Jerry was not called

down till dark ; and long after Prose had, by making interest with the captain's steward, obtained the keys and released his neck from its enthrallment.

The party in the second boat were landed on the reef, and while the rest were attending to the survey, Macallan was employed in examining the crevices of the rocks, and collecting the different objects of natural history which presented themselves. The boat was sent on board, as it was not required until the afternoon, when the gun-room officers were to return to dinner. The captain's gig remained on shore, and the coxswain was employed by Macallan in receiving from him the different shells and varieties of coral with which the rocks were covered.

"Take particular care of this specimen," said the surgeon, as he delivered a bunch of corallines into the hands of Marshall, the coxswain.

"I ax your pardon, Mr. Macallan, but what's the good of picking up all this rubbish?"

"Rubbish!" replied the surgeon, laughing; "why, you don't know what it is. What do you think those are which I just gave you?"

"Why, weeds are rubbish, and these be only pieces of seaweed."

"They happen to be animals."

"Hanimals!" cried the coxswain, with an incredulous smile; "well, sir, I always took 'em to be weggittables. We live and larn, sure enough. Are cabbage and hingions hanimals too?"

"No," replied the surgeon, much amused, "they are not, Marshall; but these are. Now take them to the boat, and put them in a safe place, and then come back."

"I say, Bill, look ye here," said the coxswain to one of the sailors, who was lying down on the thwarts of the boat, holding up the coral to him in a contemptuous manner, "what the hell d'ye think this is? Why, it's a hanimal!"

"A what?"

"I'll be blow'd if the doctor don't say it's a hanimal!"

"No more a hanimal than I am," replied the sailor, laying his head down again on the thwarts and shutting his eyes.

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In a few minutes Marshall returned to the surgeon, who, tired with clambering over the rocks, was sitting down to rest himself a little. "Well, Marshall, I hope you have not hurt what I gave into your charge."

"Hurt 'em!—why, sir, a'ter what you told me, I'd as soon have hurt a cat."

"What, you are superstitious on that point, as seamen generally are."

"Super—what, Mr. Macallan? I only knows that they who ill-treats a cat comes worst off. I've proof positive of that since I have been in the service. I could spin you a yarn."

"Well now, Marshall, pray do. Come, sit down here; I am fond of proof positive. Now, let me hear what you have to say, and I'll listen without interrupting you."

The coxswain took his seat as Macallan desired, and taking the quid of tobacco out of his cheek, and laying it down on the rock beside him, commenced as follows:—

"Well now, d'ye see, Mr. Macallan, I'll just exactly tell you how it was, and then I leaves you to judge whether a cat's to be sarved in that way. It was when I belonged to the *Survellanty* frigate, that we were lying in Cawsand Bay awaiting for sailing orders. We hadn't dropped the anchor more than a week, and there was no liberty ashore. Well, sir, the purser found out that his steward was a bit of a rascal, and turns him adrift. The ship's company knew that long afore; for it was not a few that he had cheated, and we were all glad to see him and his traps handed down the side. Now, sir, this here fellow had a black cat—but it warn't at all like other cats. When it was a kitten they had cut off his tail close to its starn, and his ears had been shaved off just as close to his figure-head, and the hanimal used to set up on his hind legs and fight like a rabbit. It had quite lost its natur, as it were, and looked for all the world like a little imp of darkness. It always lived in the purser's steward's room, and we never seed him but when we went down for the biscuit and flour as was sarving out. \*

"Well, sir, when this rascal of a steward leaves the ship, he had no natural affection for his cat, and he leaves him on board, belonging to nobody; and the steward as comes

## THE KING'S OWN

in his place turns him out of the steward's room; so the poor jury-rigged little devil had to take care of itself.

"We all tried to coax it into one berth or the other, but the poor brute wouldn't take to nobody. You know, sir, a cat doesn't like to change, so he wandered about the ship mewing all day and thieving all night. At last he takes to the master's cabin and makes a dirt there, and the master gets very savage, and swears that he'll kill him if ever he comes athwart him.

"Now, sir, you knows it's the natur of cats always to make a dirt in the same place—reason why, God only knows; and so this poor black devil always returns to the master's cabin, and makes it, as it were, his headquarters. At last the master, who was as even-tempered an officer as ever I sailed with, finds one day that his sextant case is all of a smudge; so being touched in a sore place, he gets into a great rage, and orders all the boys of the ship to catch the cat; and after much ado the poor cat was caught, and brought aft into the gun-room. 'Now, then, P——,' said the master to the first lieutenant, 'will you help kill the dirty beast?'—and the first lieutenant, who cared more about his lower deck being clean than fifty human beings' lives, said he would; so they called the sargant o' marines, and orders him to bring up two ship's muskets and some ball cartridge, and they goes on deck with the cat in their arms.

"Well, sir, when the men saw the cat brought up on deck, and hears that he was to be hove overboard, they all congregates together upon the lee gangway, and gives their opinions on the subject; and one says, 'Let's go and speak to the first lieutenant;' and another says, 'He'll put you on the black list;' and so they don't do nothing—all except Jenkins, the boatswain's mate, who calls to a waterman out of the main-deck port, and says, 'Waterman,' says he, 'when they heaves that cat overboard, do you pick him up and I'll give you a shilling;' and the waterman says as how he would, for you see, sir, the men didn't know that the muskets had been ordered up to shoot the poor beast.

"Well, sir, the waterman laid off on his oars, and the men, knowing what Jenkins had done, were content. But when

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the sargant o' marines comes up and loads the muskets with ball cartridges, then the men begins to grumble ; howsomever, the master throws the cat overboard off the lee-quarter, and the waterman, as soon as he sees her splash in the water, backs astarn to take her into the boat, but the first lieutenant tells him to get out of the way if he doesn't want a bullet through his boat—so he pulls ahead again. The master fires first, and hits the cat a clip on the neck, which turns her half over, and the first lieutenant fires his musket, and cuts the poor hanimal right in half by the backbone, and she sprawls a bit, and then goes down to the bottom. 'Capital shots both,' says the first lieutenant ; 'he'll never take an observation of your sextant again, master ;' and they both laughs heartily, and goes down the ladder to get their dinner.

"Well, sir, I never seed a ship's company in such a farmant, or such a nitty kicked up 'tween decks in my life : it was almost as bad as a mutiny ; but they piped to grog soon a'ter, and the men goes to their berths and talks the matter over more coolly, and they all agrees that no good would come to the ship a'ter that, and very melancholy they were, and couldn't forget it.

"Well, sir, our sailing orders comes down the next day, and the first cutter is sent on shore for the captain, and six men out of ten leaves the boat, and I'm sure that it warn't for desartion, but all along of that cat being hove overboard and butchered in that way—for three on 'em were messmates of mine—for you know, sir, we talks them matters over, and if they had had a mind to quit the sarvice, I should have know'd it. The captain was as savage as a bear with a sore head, and did nothing but growl for three days afterwards, and it was well to keep clear on him, for he snapped right and left like a mad dog. I never seed him in such a humour afore, except once when he had a fortnight's foul wind.

"Well, sir, we had been out a week, when we falls in with a large frigate, and beats to quarters. We expected her to be a Frenchman ; but as soon as she comes within gunshot she hoists the private signal, and proves to be the *Semiramus*, and our senior officer. The next morning, cruising together, we sees a vessel in-shore, and the *Semiramus* stands in on the larboard tack, and orders us by signal to keep away, and prevent his running along the coast. The vessel finding that



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she couldn't go no way, comes to an anchor under a battery of two guns ; and then the commodore makes the signal for boats manned and armed to cut her out.

"Well, sir, our first lieutenant was in his cot, on his beam ends, with the rheumatiz, and couldn't go on sarvice ; so the second and third lieutenants, and master, and one of the midshipmen, had command of our four boats, and the commodore sent seven of his'n. The boats pulled in, and carried the vessel in good style, and there never was a man hurt. As many boats as could clap on her took her in tow, and out she came at the rate of four knots an hour. I was coxswain of the pinnace, which was under the charge of the master, and we were pulling on board, as all the boats weren't wanted to tow ; and we were about three cables' length ahead of the vessel, when I sees her aground upon a rock, that nobody knows nothing about, on the starboard side of the entrance of the harbour ; and I said that she were grounded to the master, who orders us to pull back to the vessel to assist 'em in getting her off again.

"Well, sir, we gets alongside of her, and finds that she was off again, having only grazed the rock, and the boats towed her out again with a rally. Now the Frenchmen were firing at us with muskets, for we had shut in the battery, and as we were almost out of the musket-shot, the balls only pitted in the water, without doing any harm—and I was a-standing with the master on the starn-sheets, my body being just between him and the beach where they were a-firing from. It seemed mortally impossible to hit him, except through me. Howsomever, a bullet passes between my arm—just here—and my side, and striked him dead upon the spot. There warn't another man hit out of nine boats' crews, and I'll leave you to guess whether the sailors didn't declare that he got his death all along of murdering the cat.

"Well, sir, the men thought, as he had fired first, that now all was over ; only Jenkins, the boatswain's-mate, said 'that he warn't quite sure of that.' We parts company with the commodore the next day, and the day a'ter, as it turned out, we falls in with a French frigate. She had the heels of us, and kept us at long balls, but we hoped to cut her off from running into Brest if a slant o' wind favoured us, and obligating her to fight, whether or no. Tom Collins, the first lieutenant, was

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still laid up in his cot with the rheumaticks, but when he hears of a French frigate he gets up and goes on deck; but when he gets there he tips us a faint and falls down on the carronade slide, and his hat rolled off his head into the waist. He tried, but he was so weak that he couldn't get up on his sticks again.

"Well, sir, the captain goes up to him, and says something about zeal, and all that, and tells him he must go down below again, because he's quite incapable, and orders the men at the foremost carronades to take him to his cot. Now, sir, just as we were handing him down the ladder—for I was captain of the gun—a shot comes in at the second port, and takes off his skull as he lays in our arms, and never hurts another man. He was dead in no time; and what was more curious, it was the only shot that hit the frigate. The Frenchman got into Brest, so it was no action after all.

"So you see, Mr. Macallan, in two scrummages only two men were killed out of hundreds, and they were the two who had killed the cat! Now, that's what I calls proof positive, for I seed it all with my own eyes; and I should like to know whether you could do the same with regard to that thing being a hanimal?"

"I will, Marshall; to-morrow you shall see that with your own eyes."

"To-morrow come never!"\* muttered the coxswain, replacing the quid of tobacco in his cheek.

## CHAPTER XXVII

And, lo! while he was expounding, in set terms, the most abstruse of his pious doctrines, the head of the tub whereon the good man stood gave way, and the preacher was lost from before the eyes of the whole congregation.—*Life of the Rev. Mr. Smith, S.S.*

SEYMOUR, who was always the companion of Captain M—— whenever either instruction or amusement was to be gained, now quitted the surveying party to join Macallan,

\* The phraseology of sailors has been so caricatured of late, that I am afraid my story will be considered as translated into English. Seamen, however, must decide which is correct.

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who still continued seated on the rocks, reflecting upon the remarkable coincidence which the coxswain had narrated, sufficient in itself to confirm the superstitious ideas of the sailors for another century. His thoughts naturally reverted to the other point, in which seafaring men are equally bigoted—the disastrous consequences of “sailing on a Friday;” the origin of which superstition can easily be traced to early Catholicism, when, out of respect for the day of universal redemption, they were directed by their pastors to await the “morrow’s sun.” “Thus,” mentally exclaimed Macallan, “has religion degenerated into superstition; and that which, from the purity of its origin, would have commanded our respect, is now only deserving of our contempt. It is by the motives that have produced them that our actions must be weighed. That which once was an offering of religious veneration and love, is now a tribute to superstition and to fear. Well, Seymour,” said he, addressing his companion, “how do you like surveying?”

“Not much; the sun is hot, and the glare so powerful that I am almost blind. What a pity it is that we had not some trees here to shade us from the heat! I should like to plant some for the benefit of those who may come after us.”

“A correct feeling on your part, my boy; but no trees would grow here at present—there is no soil.”

“There is plenty of some sort or other in the part where we have been surveying.”

“Yes, the sand thrown up by the sea, and the particles of shells and rock which have been triturated by the wave, or decomposed by the alternate action of the elements; but there is no vegetable matter, without which there can be no vegetable produce. Observe, Willy,—the skeleton of this earth is framed of rocks and mountains, which have been proudly rearing their heads into the clouds, or lying in dark majesty beneath the seas, since the creation of the world, when they were fixed by the Almighty architect to remain till time shall be no more. Over them we find the wrecks of a former world—once as beautiful, as thickly peopled, but more thoughtless and more wicked than the present—which was hurled into one general chaos, and its component, but incongruous, parts amalgamated in awful mockery by the Deluge—that

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tremendous evidence of the wrath of Heaven. But it has long passed away; and o'er the relics of former creation, o'er the kneaded mass of man in his pride, of woman in her beauty, of arts in their splendour, of vice in her zenith, and of virtue in her tomb, we are standing upon another, teeming with life, and yielding forth her fruits in the season as before. But, Willy, the supports of life are not to be found in primeval rocks or antediluvial remains. It is from the superficial covering, the thin crust with which the earth is covered, composed of the remains of former existence, of the breccia of exhausted nature, that animal creation derives its support; and it is the grand axiom of the universe, that 'animal life can only be supported by animal remains.' From the meanest insect that crawls upon the ground to man in his perfection, life is supported and continued by animal and vegetable food; and it is only the decayed matter returned to the earth which enables the lofty cedar to extend its boughs, or the lowly violet to exhale its perfume. This is a world of eternal reproduction and decay—one endless cycle of the living preying on the dead—a phoenix yearly, daily, and hourly springing from its ashes, in renewed strength and beauty. The blade of grass, which shoots from the soil, flowers, casts its seed, and dies, to make room for its offspring, nourished by the relics of its parent, is a type of the never-changing law, controlling all Nature, even to man himself, who must pass away to make room for the generation which is to come."

The boat which, returning from the ship, appeared like a black speck on the water, indicated that the dinner-hour was at hand; and Price and the purser, who had come on shore with Macallan, now joined him and Willy, who were sitting down on the rocks at the water's edge.

"Well, Macallan," said Price, "it's a fine thing to be a philosopher. What is that which Milton says? Let me see!—sweet—something—divine philosophy—I forget the exact words. Well, what have you caught?"

"If you've caught nothing, doctor, you're better off than I am," said the purser, wiping his brow, "for I've caught a headache."

"I have been very well amused," replied Macallan.

## THE KING'S OWN

"Ay, I suppose, like what's-his-name in the forest—you recollect?"

"No, indeed, I do not."

"Don't you? Bless my soul—you know, sermons in stones, and good in everything. I forget how the lines run. Don't you recollect, O'Keefe?" continued Price, speaking loud in the purser's ear.

"No, I never collect. I don't understand these things," replied the purser, taking his seat by Macallan, and addressing him—"I cannot think what pleasure there can be in poking about the rocks, as you do."

"It serves to amuse me, O'Keefe."

"Abuse you, my dear fellow! Indeed I never meant it—I beg your pardon—you mistook me."

"It was my fault. I did not speak sufficiently loud. Make no apology."

"Too proud to make an apology!—No, indeed—I only asked what amusement you could find?—that's all."

"What amusement?" replied Macallan, rising from his seat, annoyed at these repeated attacks from all quarters upon his favourite study. "Listen to me, and I will explain to you how investigation is the parent of both amusement and instruction. What is this rock that I am standing on? Has it remained here for ages to be dashed by the furious ocean? or has it lately sprung from the depths, from the silent labour of the indefatigable zoophites? Look at its sides; behold the variety of marine vegetation with which it is loaded. Are they of the class of the *ulvæ*, *confervæ*, or *fuci*? to be welcomed as old acquaintance, or, hitherto unnoticed, to be added to the catalogue of Nature's endless stores? And what are those corals that, like mimic tenants of the forest, extend their graceful boughs! Look at the variety of shells which are adhering to its sides. Observe the *patellæ*—with what tenacity they cling to save themselves from being washed into the deep water, and being devoured by the fishes that are playing in its chasms! What a source of endless amusement, what a field for deep reflection, is there in the investigation of this one little rock! When you contemplate the instinct of the different species, the powers given to them, so adapted to their wants and their privations, is not the

## THE KING'S OWN

eye delighted, is not the mind enlarged, and are not the feelings harmonised? Study the works of the creation, and you turn a desert into a peopled city, a barren rock into a source of admiration and delight. Nay, search into Nature for a few minutes, and you rise a better man. Dive into——”

What the conclusion of the doctor's rhapsody may have been is not known; for, stamping too energetically upon the seaweed on the edge of the rock, his foot slipped, and he disappeared, with the perpendicular descent and velocity of a deep sea lead, into the water alongside of it.

Marshall, the coxswain, who had been astonished at his speech, to which he had listened with mouth open for want of comprehension, quite forgot the respect due to an officer at this unexpected finale.

“Watch, there, watch!” cried the man, and then threw himself down and rolled in convulsions of laughter. Price and Willy, whose mirth was almost as excessive, did, however, run to his assistance, and caught him by the collar as he rose again to the surface, for it was considerably out of his depth; while the deaf purser, whose eyes had been fixed on the ground, in deep attention to catch the doctor's words, and whose ears were not sufficiently acute to hear the splash, looked up as they were going to his assistance, and asked with surprise, “Where's the doctor?”

The sides of the rock were so slippery that the united efforts of Price and Seymour (whose powers were much enfeebled from extreme mirth) were not sufficient to haul Macallan upon *terra firma*. “Marshall, come here directly, sir, and help us,” cried Willy—an order which the coxswain, who was sufficiently recovered, immediately obeyed.

“Give me your hand, Mr. Macallan,” said the man, as the surgeon was clinging to the seaweed; “it's no use holding on by them slippery hanimals. Now, then, Mr. Price—all together.”

“Ay, and as soon as you please,” called out the malicious boatkeeper of the gig; “I seed a large shark but a minute ago.”

“Quick—quick!” roared the surgeon, who already imagined his leg encircled by the teeth of the ravenous animal.



## THE KING'S OWN

By their united efforts Macallan was at last safely landed—and after much sputtering, blowing, and puffing, was about to address the coxswain in no very amicable manner, when the purser interrupted him.

“By the powers, doctor, but you took the right way to have a close examination of all those fine things which you were giving us a catalogue of; but now give us the remainder of your speech—you gave us a practical illustration of diving.”

“What sort of sensation was it, doctor?” said Price. “You recollect Shakspeare—and ‘O, methinks what pain it was to drown’—Let me see—something——”

“Pray don’t tax your memory, Price; it’s something like our country—past all further taxation.”

“That’s the severest thing you’ve said since we’ve sailed together. You’re out of humour, doctor. Well, you know what Shakspeare says: ‘There never yet was found a philosopher’—something about the toothache. I forget the words.”

These attacks did not at all tend to restore the equanimity of the doctor’s temper, which, it must be acknowledged, had some excuse for being disturbed by the events of the morning; but he proved himself a wise man, for he made no further reply. The boat pulled in, and the party returned on board; and when Macallan had divested himself of his uncomfortable attire, and joined his messmates at the dinner-table, he had recovered his usual serenity of disposition, and joined himself in the laugh which had been created at his expense.

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER XXVIII

A man must serve his time to every trade,  
Save censure.—Critics all are ready made.  
Take hackneyed jokes from Miller, got by rote,  
With just enough of learning to misquote ;  
A mind well skilled to find or forge a fault,  
A turn for punning—call it Attic salt :  
Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a lucky hit,  
Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit,  
Care not for feeling,—pass your proper jest,  
And stand a critic ! hated, yet caressed.

BYRON.

THE survey was continued. One morning, after a fatiguing walk from point to point, occasionally crossing from one islet to the others in the boats, the party collected under a projecting rock, which screened them from the rays of the vertical sun, and the repast, which had been brought from the ship in the morning, was spread before them. The party consisted of Captain M—— ; Pearce, the master ; the surgeon, who had accompanied them to explore the natural productions of the reef ; and the confidential clerk of Captain M——, a man of the name of Collier, who had been many years in his service, and who was now employed in noting down the angles taken with the theodolite.

Tired with the labours of the morning, Captain M—— did not rise immediately after their meal had been despatched, but entered into conversation with the surgeon, who was looking over the memoranda which he had made relative to the natural history of the reef.

“Do you intend to write a book, Mr. Macallan, that you have collected so many remarks?”

“Indeed I do not, sir. I have no ambition to be an author.”

The clerk, who was very taciturn in general, and seldom spoke unless on points connected with his duty, joined the conversation by addressing the surgeon.

“It's a service of danger, sir, and you must be prepared to meet the attacks both of authors and reviewers.”

## THE KING'S OWN

"Of reviewers I can imagine," replied Macallan; "but why of authors?"

"That depends very much whether you tread over beaten ground or strike into a new path. In the latter case you will be pretty safe from both, as the authors will be indifferent, and the reviewers, in all probability, incapable."

"And why if I enter upon a beaten track, which, I presume, infers a style of writing in which others have preceded me?"

"Because, sir, when a new author makes his appearance, he is much in the same situation as a strange dog entering a kennel preoccupied by many others. He is immediately attacked and worried by the rest, until, either by boldly defending himself, or pertinaciously refusing to quit, he eventually obtains a domiciliation, and becomes an acknowledged member of the fraternity."

"Why, Mr. Collier," observed the captain, "you seem to be quite *au fait* as to literary arrangements."

"I ought to be, sir," replied the clerk; "for in the course of my life I have attempted to become an author, and practised as a reviewer."

"Indeed! And did you fail in your attempt at authorship?"

"My work was never printed, sir, for no bookseller would undertake to publish it. I tried the whole town; no man would give himself the trouble to look over the MS. It was said that the public taste was not that way, and that it would not do. At last I received a letter of introduction from an old acquaintance to his uncle, who was a literary character. He certainly did read some parts of my performance."

"And what then?"

"Why, sir, he shook his head—told me with a sneer that, as an author, I should never succeed; but he added, with a sort of encouraging smile, that from some parts of the MS. which he had perused he thought that he could find employment for me in the reviewing line, if I chose to undertake it."

"My pride was hurt, and I answered that I could not agree with him, as I considered that it required the ability to write a book yourself to enable you to decide upon the merits of others."

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"Well, I must say that I agree with you," replied the captain. "Proceed in your story, for I am interested."

"My friend answered, 'By no means, my dear sir; a d—d bad author generally makes a very good reviewer. Indeed, sir, to be candid with you, I never allow any gentleman to review for me unless he has met with a misfortune similar to yours. It is one of the necessary qualifications of a good reviewer that he should have failed as an author; for without the exacerbated feelings arising from disappointment, he would not possess gall sufficient for his task, and his conscience would stand in his way when he was writing against it, if he were not spurred on by the keen probes of envy.'"

"And he convinced you?"

"My poverty did, sir, if he did not. I worked many months for him; but I had better have earned my bread as a common labourer."

"Reviews ought to pay well, too," observed Macallan; "they are periodicals in great demand."

"They are so," replied Captain M——; "and the reasons are obvious. Few people take the trouble to think for themselves; but, on the contrary, are very glad to find others who will think for them. Some cannot find time to read, others will not find it. A review removes all these difficulties—gives the busy world an insight into what is going on in the literary world, and enables the lounge not to appear wholly ignorant of a work the merits of which may happen to be discussed. But what is the consequence? That seven-eighths of the town are led by the nose by this or that periodical work, having wholly lost sight of the fact that reviews are far from being gospel. Indeed, I do not know any set of men so likely to err as reviewers. In the first place, there is no class of people so irascible, so full of party feeling, so disgraced by envy, as authors; hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness seem to preside over science. Their political opinions step in, and increase the undue preponderance; and, to crown all, they are more influenced by money, being proverbially more in want of it than others. How, then, is it to be expected that reviews can be impartial? I seldom read them myself, as I consider that it is better to know nothing than to be misled."

## THE KING'S OWN

"And if it is a fair question, Mr. Collier," continued Captain M——, "in what manner were you employed?"

"I am almost ashamed to tell you, sir—I was a mere automaton, a machine, in the hands of others. A new publication was sent to me, with a private mark from my employer, directing the quantum of praise or censure which it was to incur. If the former were allotted to it, the best passages were selected; if condemned to the latter, all the worst. The connecting parts of the review were made up from a commonplace book, in which, by turning to any subject, you found the general heads and extracts from the works of others, which you were directed to alter, so as to retain the ideas, but disguise the style, that it might appear original."

"Are you aware of the grounds of praise or abuse? for it appears that those who directed the censure did not read the publications?"

"The grounds were various. Books printed by a bookseller to whom my master had a dislike were sure to be run down; on the contrary, those published by his connections or friends were as much applauded. Moreover,\* the influence of authors who were afraid of a successful rival in their own line, often damned a work."

"But you do not mean to say that all reviews are conducted with such want of principle?"

"By no means. There are many very impartial and clever critiques. The misfortune is, that unless you read the work that is reviewed, you cannot distinguish one from the other."

"And pray, what induced you to abandon this creditable employment?"

"A quarrel, sir. I had reviewed a work with the private mark of approval, when it was found out to be a mistake, and I was desired to review it with censure. I expected to be paid for the second review as well as for the first. My employer thought proper to consider it all as one job, and refused—so we parted."

"Pretty tricks in trade, indeed!" replied Captain M——. "Why, Mr. Collier, you appear to have belonged to a gang of literary bravoës, whose pens, like stilettoes, were always ready to stab, in the dark, the unfortunate individuals who might be pointed out to them by interest or revenge."

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"I acknowledge the justice of your remarks, sir; all that I can offer in my defence is, the excuse of the libeller to Cardinal Richelieu—'*Il faut vivre, monsieur.*'"

"And I answer you, with the Cardinal—'*Je ne vois pas la nécessité,*'" replied Captain M——, with a smile, as he rose to resume his labours.

## CHAPTER XXIX

He fell, and, deadly pale,  
Groaned out his soul.

MILTON.

DO, mamma, come here," said Emily, as she was looking out of the window of an inn on the road, where they had stopped to take some refreshment—"do come and see what a pretty lady is in the chariot which has stopped at the door."

Mrs. Rainscourt complied with her daughter's request, and acknowledged the justice of the remark when she saw the expressive countenance of Susan (now Mrs. M'Elvina), who was listening to the proposal of her husband that they should alight and partake of some refreshment. Susan consented, and was followed by old Hornblow, who, pulling out his watch from his white cassimere *femoralia*, which he had continued to wear ever since the day of the wedding, declared that they must stop to dine.

"This country air makes one confoundedly hungry," said the old man; "I declare I never had such an appetite in Cateaton Street. Susan, my dear, order something that won't take long in cooking—a beef-steak, if they have nothing down at the fire."

Mrs. Rainscourt, who was as much prepossessed with the appearance of M'Elvina as with that of his wife, gave vent to her thoughts with "I wonder who they are!" Her maid, who was in the room, took this as a hint to obtain the gratification of her mistress's curiosity as well as her own, and proceeded accordingly on her voyage of discovery. In a few minutes she returned, having boarded the Abigail of



## THE KING'S OWN

Mrs. M'Elvina just as she was coming to an anchor inside the bar; and having made an interchange of intelligence, with a rapidity incredible to those who are not aware of the velocity of communication between this description of people, re-entered the parlour, to make a report to her commanding officer precisely at the same moment that Susan's maid was delivering her cargo of intelligence to her own mistress.

"They are a new-married couple, ma'am, and their name is M'Elvina," said the one.

"The lady is a Mrs. Rainscourt, and the young lady is her daughter, and a great heiress," whispered the other.

"They have purchased the hunting box close to the —— Hall, and are going there now," said the first.

"They live at the great park, close to where you are going, ma'am," said the second.

"The old gentleman's name is Hornblow. He is the lady's father, and as rich as a Jew, they say," continued Mrs. Rainscourt's maid.

"Mrs. Rainscourt don't live with her husband, ma'am; by all accounts he's a bad 'un," continued the Abigail of Susan.

The publicity of the staircase of a hotel is very convenient for making an acquaintance; and it happened that, just after these communications had been made, Emily was ascending the stairs as Mrs. M'Elvina was going down to join her husband and father at the dinner table. The smiling face and beaming eyes of Emily, who evidently lingered to be spoken to, were so engaging, that she soon found her way into the room which the M'Elvins were occupying.

Mrs. Rainscourt was not sorry to find that she was to have for neighbours a couple whose appearance had so prepossessed her in their favour. As she expected that her society would be rather confined, she did not suffer to escape the favourable opportunity which presented itself of making their acquaintance. As they were returning to their vehicles, Emily ran to Mrs. M'Elvina to wish her good-bye, and Mrs. Rainscourt expressed her thanks for the notice they had taken of her daughter. A few minutes' conversation ended in "hoping to have the pleasure of making their acquaintance as soon as they were settled."

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The carriages drove off, and we shall follow that of the M'Elvinas, which arrived at its destination late in the evening, without any accident.

The cottage-ornée (as all middle-sized houses with verandas and French windows are now designated) which Hornblow had purchased was, for a wonder, quite as complete as described in the particulars of sale. It had the sloping lawn in front; the three acres (more or less) of plantation and pleasure ground, tastefully laid out, and planted with thriving young trees; the capital walled gardens, stocked with the choicest fruit trees, in full bearing; abundant springs of the finest water; stabling for six horses; cow-house, cart-house, farmyard, and complete piggery. The dimensions of the conservatory and rooms in the interior of the house were quite correct; and the land attached to it was according to "the accompanying plan," and divided into parcels, designated by the rural terms of "Homestead," "Lob's-pound," "Eight-acre-meadow," "Little-orchard field," &c. &c.

In short, it was a very eligible purchase, and a very pretty and retired domicile; and when our party arrived, the flowers seemed to yield a more grateful perfume, the trees appeared more umbrageous, and the verdure of the meadows of a more refreshing green, from the contrast with so many hours' travelling upon a dusty road during a sultry day.

"Oh, how beautiful these roses are! Do look, my dear father."

"They are, indeed," replied old Hornblow, delighted at the happy face of his daughter; "but I should like some tea, Susan—I am not used to so much jumbling. I feel tired, and shall go to bed early."

Tea was accordingly prepared, soon after which the old gentleman rose to retire.

"Well," said he, as he lighted his chamber-candle, "I suppose I am settled here for life; but I hardly know what to do with myself. I must make acquaintance with all the flowers and all the trees; the budding of the spring will make me think of grandchildren, the tree clothed in its beauty of you, and the fall of the leaf of myself. I must count the poultry, and look after the pigs, and see the cows milked. I was fond of the little parlour in

## THE KING'S OWN

Cateaton Street, because I had sat in it so long; and I suppose that I shall get fond of this place too, if I find enough to employ and amuse me. But you must be quick and give me a grandchild, Susan, and then I shall nurse him all day long. Good-night—God bless you, my dear—good-night.”

“Good-night, my dear sir,” replied Susan, who had coloured deeply at the request which he had made.

“Good-night, M’Elvina, my boy; this is the first night we pass under this roof; may we live many happy years in it;” and old Hornblow left the room and ascended the stairs.

M’Elvina had encircled Susan’s waist with his arm, and was probably about to utter some wish in unison with that of her father, when the noise of a heavy fall sounded in their ears.

“Good Heaven!” cried Susan, “it is my father who has fallen downstairs.”

M’Elvina rushed out; it was but too true. The stair-carpet had not yet been laid down, and his foot had slipped at the uppermost step. He was taken up senseless, and when medical advice was procured, his head and his spine were found to be seriously injured. In a few days, during which he never spoke, old Hornblow was no more. Thus the old man, like the prophet of old, after all his toiling, was but permitted to see the promised land; and thus are our days cut short at the very moment of realising our most sanguine expectations.

Reader, let us look at home. Shall I, now thoughtlessly riding upon the agitated billow, with but one thin plank between me and death, and yet so busy with this futile work, be permitted to bring it to a close? The hand which guides the flowing pen may to-morrow be stiff; the head now teeming with its subject may be past all thought ere to-morrow’s sun is set—ay, sooner! And you, reader, who may so far have had the courage to proceed in the volumes without throwing them away, shall you be permitted to finish your more trifling task?—or, before its close, be hurried from this transitory scene where fiction ends, and the spirit, re-endowed, will be enabled to raise its eyes upon the lightning beams of unveiled truth?

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER XXX

And if you chance his shipp to borde,  
This counsel I must give withall.

*Ballad of Sir Andrew Barton, 1560.*

Discretion

And hardy valour are the twins of honour,  
And, nursed together, make a conqueror!  
Divided, but a talker.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

THE survey having been completed, Captain M——, in pursuance of the orders which he had received, weighed his anchor, and proceeded to cruise until the want of provisions and water should compel him to return into port. For many days the look-out men at the mastheads were disappointed in their hopes of reporting a strange sail, the chase or capture of which would relieve the monotony of constant sky and water, until, one Sunday forenoon, as Captain M—— was performing divine service, the man at the masthead hailed the deck with “A strange sail on the weather-bow!”

The puritan may be shocked to hear that the service was speedily, although decorously, closed; but Captain M—— was aware from the fidgeting of the ship’s company upon the capstan bars, on which they were seated, that it would be impossible to regain their attention to the service, even if he had felt inclined to proceed; and he well knew that any worship of God in which the mind and heart were not engaged was but an idle ceremony, if not a solemn mockery. The hands were turned up, all sail was made, and in an hour the stranger was to be seen with the naked eye from the fore-yard.

“What do you make of her, Mr. Stewart?” said the first lieutenant to him, as he sat aloft with his glass directed towards the vessel.

“A merchant ship, sir, in ballast.”

“What did he say, Jerry?” inquired Prose, who stood by him on the gangway.

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"A French vessel, deeply laden, Prose."

"Bravo, Jerry!" said Prose, rubbing his hands. "We shall get some prize-money, I do declare."

"To be sure we shall. It will give us twenty pounds at least for a midshipman's share, for her cargo must be sugar and coffee. Only, confound it, one has to wait so long for it. I'll sell mine, dog-cheap, if any one will buy it. Will you, Prose?"

"Why, Jerry, I don't much like speculation; but, now, what would you really sell your chance for?"

"I'll take ten pounds for it. We're certain to come up with her."

"Ten pounds! No, Jerry, that is too much. I'll tell you what, I'll give you five pounds."

"Done," replied Jerry, who was aware that a vessel in ballast would not give him thirty shillings, if Captain M—— sent her in, which was very unlikely. "Where's the money?"

"Oh, you must trust to my honour; the first port we go into, I pledge you my word that you shall have it."

"I don't doubt your word, or your honour, the least, Prose; but still I should like to have the money in my hand. Could you not borrow it? Never mind—it's a bargain."

In two hours the frigate had neared the stranger so as to distinguish her water-line from the deck, and on hoisting her ensign and pendant the vessel bore down to her.

"She has hoisted English colours, sir," reported Stewart to the captain.

"What, Stewart! did you say that she had hoisted English colours?" inquired Prose, with an anxious face.

"Yes, you booby, I did."

"Well, now, I do declare," cried Prose, with dismay, "if I haven't lost five pounds."

The vessel ran under the stern of the frigate, and requested a boat to be sent on board, as she had intelligence to communicate. The boat returned, and acquainted Captain M—— that the vessel had been boarded and plundered by a French privateer schooner, which had committed great depredation in that quarter, and that it was not above eight hours that she had left her and made sail towards Porto

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Rico, taking out two merchants, who were passengers. The boat was immediately hoisted up, and all sail made in the direction of the island, which was not above fifteen leagues distant. As the day closed in, their eyes were gratified by the sight of the schooner, becalmed close in under the land. Perceiving the frigate in pursuit of her, and unable to escape, she came to an anchor in a small and shallow bay, within a cable's length of the beach. Captain M——, having run his ship as close in as the depth of water would permit, which was between two and three miles of her, so as to render her escape impossible, came to an anchor, signifying to his officers his determination to cut her out with his boats on the ensuing day.

The officers who were to be entrusted with the command of the boats, and the crews which were to be employed on the service, were selected, and mustered on the quarter-deck previous to the hammocks being piped down, that the former might hold themselves in readiness, and that the latter might remain in their hammocks during the night. All was anxiety for the sun to rise again upon those who were about to venture in the lottery, where the prizes would be honour, and the blanks—death. There were but few whose souls were of that decided brute composition that they could sleep through the whole of the tedious night. They woke and “swore a prayer or two, then slept again.” The sun had not yet made his appearance above the horizon, although the eastern blush announced that the spinning earth would shortly whirl the *Aspasia* into his presence, when the pipes of the boatswain and his mates, with the summons of “All hands ahoy—up all hammocks!” were obeyed with the alacrity so characteristic of English seamen anticipating danger. The hammocks were soon stowed, and the hands turned up. “Out boats!” The yard tackles and stays were hooked, and the larger boats from the booms descended with a heavy splash into the water, which they threw out on each side of them as they displaced it with their weight; while the cutters from the quarter-davits were already lowered down, and were being manned under the chains.

Broad daylight discovered the privateer, who, aware of their intentions, had employed the night in taking every



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precaution that skill could suggest to repel the expected attack; secured with cables and hawsers, extending from each bow and quarter—her starboard broadside directed to seaward—her boarding netting triced up to the lower rigging—and booms, connected together, rigged out from the sides, to prevent them from laying her on board. There was no wind; the sea was smooth as glass; and the French colours, hoisted in defiance at each masthead, hung listlessly down the spars, as if fainting for the breeze which would expand them in their vigour. She was pierced for eight ports on a side; and the guns, which pointed through them, with the tompions out, ready to shower destruction upon her assailants, showed like the teeth of the snarling wolf who stands at bay, awaiting the attack of his undaunted pursuers.

The boats had received their guns, which were fixed on slides, so as to enable them to be fired over the bows without impeding the use of the oars; the ammunition and arm-chests had been placed in security abaft.

The sailors, with their cutlasses belted round their waists, and a pistol stuck in their girdles, or in a becket at the side of the boat, ready to their hands; the marines, in proportion to the number which each boat could carry, sitting in the stern-sheets, with their muskets between their legs, and their well-pipeclayed belts for bayonet and cartouch-box crossed over their old jackets, half dirt, half finery—all was ready for shoving off, when Captain M—— desired the officers whom he had appointed to the expedition to step down into his cabin. Bully, the first lieutenant, was unwell with an intermittent fever, and Captain M——, at the request of Macallan, would not accede to his anxiety to take the command. Price, Courtenay, Stewart, and three other midshipmen were those who had been selected for the dangerous service.

"Gentlemen," said Captain M——, as they stood round the table in the fore-cabin waiting for his communication, "I must call your attention to a few points which it is my wish that you should bear in remembrance, now that you are about to proceed upon what will, in all likelihood, prove to be an arduous service. This vessel has already done so much mischief, that I conceive it my duty to

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capture her if possible; and although there is no service in which, generally speaking, there is so great a sacrifice of life, in proportion to the object to be attained, as that which is generally termed 'cutting out,' yet rather than she should escape, to the further injury of our trade, I have determined to have recourse to the measure.

"But, gentlemen (and to you, Mr. Price, as commanding the expedition, I particularly address myself), recollect that, even in this extreme case, without proper arrangement, we may not only purchase our victory too dear, but may even sacrifice a number of lives without succeeding in our attempt. Of your courage I have not the least doubt; but let it be remembered, that it is something more than mere animal courage which I expect in the behaviour of my officers. If nothing more were required, the command of these boats might be as safely entrusted to any of the foremast men, who, like the bull-dogs of our country, will thrust their heads into the lion's jaw with perfect indifference.

"What I require, and expect, and will have, from every officer who looks for promotion from my recommendation, is what I term—conduct; by which I would imply that coolness and presence of mind which enable him to calculate chances in the midst of danger, to take advantage of a favourable opportunity in the heat of an engagement, and to restrain the impetuosity of those who have fallen into the dangerous error of despising their enemy. Of such conduct the most favourable construction that can be put upon it is, that it is only preferable to indecision.

"In a service of this description, even with the greatest courage and prudence united, some loss must necessarily be expected to take place, and there is no providing against unforeseen accidents; but if I find that, by rash and injudicious behaviour, a greater sacrifice is made than there is a necessity for, depend upon it that I shall not fail to let that officer know the high value at which I estimate the life of a British sailor. With this caution I shall now give you my ideas as to what appears the most eligible plan of ensuring success. I have made a rough sketch on this paper, which will assist my explanation."

Captain M—— then entered into the plan of attack,

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pointing out the precautions which should be taken, &c., and concluded by observing, that they were by no means to consider themselves as fettered by what he had proposed, but merely to regard them as hints to guide their conduct, if found preferable to any others which might be suggested by the peculiarity of the service, and the measures adopted by the enemy. The officers returned on deck, and descended into their respective boats, where they found many of the younger midshipmen, who, although not selected for the service, had smuggled themselves into the boats that they might be participators in the conflict. Captain M——, although he did not send them on the service, had no objection to their going, and therefore pretended not to see them when he looked over the side and desired the boats to shove off. Directly the order was given, the remainder of the ship's company mounted the rigging and saluted them with three cheers.

The boats' crews tossed their oars while the cheers were given, and returned the same number. The oars again descended into the water, and the armament pulled in for the shore.

## CHAPTER XXXI

Conquest pursues, where courage leads the way.

GARTH.

THE glasses of Captain M—— and the officers who remained on board of the frigate were anxiously pointed towards the boats, which in less than half-an-hour had arrived within gun-shot of the privateer. "There is a gun from her," cried several of the men at the same moment, as the smoke boomed along the smooth water. The shot dashed up the spray under the bows of the boats, and ricochetting over them, disappeared in the wave about half a mile astern.

The boats, which previously had been pulling in all together, and without any particular order, now separated and formed a line abreast, so that there was less chance of the shot taking effect than when they were before *en masse*.

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"Very good, Mr. Price," observed the captain, who had his eye fixed on them through his glass.

The boats continued their advance towards the enemy, who fired her two long guns, both of which she had brought over to her starboard side, but though well directed, the shot did not strike any of her assailants.

"There's grape, sir," said the master, as the sea was torn and ploughed up with it close to the launch, which with the other boats was now within a hundred yards of the privateer.

"The launch returns her fire," observed Captain M——.

"And there's blaze away from the pinnace and the barge," cried one of the men, who stood on the rattlings of the main rigging. "Hurrah, my lads! keep it up," continued the man in his feeling of excitement, which, pervading Captain M—— as well as the rest of the crew, received no check, though not exactly in accordance with the strict routine of the service.

The combat now became warm; gun after gun from the privateer was rapidly fired at the boats, who were taking their stations previous to a simultaneous rush to board. The pinnace had pulled away towards the bow of the privateer; the barge had taken up a position on the quarter; the launch remained on her beam, firing round and grape from her eighteen-pounder carronade with a rapidity that almost enabled her to return gun for gun to her superiorly-armed antagonist. Both the cutters were under her stern, keeping up an incessant fire of musketry, with which they were now close enough to annoy the enemy.

"A gun from the rock close to the barge, sir!" reported the signalman.

"I expected as much," observed Captain M—— to the officers standing near him.

"One of the cutters has winded, sir; she's stretching out for the shore," cried the master.

"Bravo!—that's decided—and without waiting for orders. Who commands that boat?" inquired Captain M——.

"It's the first cutter—Mr. Stewart, sir."

The cutter was on shore before the gun could be re-loaded and fired a second time. The crew, with the

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officer at their head, were seen to clamber up the rock. In a minute they returned, and jumping into the boat, pulled off to give their aid to the capture of the vessel.

"He has spiked the gun, I am certain," observed Captain M——.

Before the cutter could regain her station, the other boats were summoned by the bugle in the launch, and with loud cheering, pulled up together to the attack. The booms which had been rigged out to prevent them from coming alongside, already shot through by the grape from the launch, offered but little resistance to the impetus with which the boats were forced against them; they either broke in two, or sank under water.

"There's board!—Hurrah!" cried all the men who remained in the *Aspasia*, cheering those who heard them not.

But I must transport the reader to the scene of slaughter; for if he remains on board of the *Aspasia*, he will distinguish nothing but fire and smoke. Don't be afraid, ladies, if I take you on board of the schooner—"these our actors are all air, thin air," raised by the magic pen for your amusement. Come, then, fearlessly with me and view the scene of mortal strife. The launch has boarded on the starboard gangway, and it is against her that the crew of the privateer have directed their main efforts.

The boarding nettings cannot be divided, and the men are thrown back, wounded or dead, into the boat. The crew of the pinnace are attempting the bows with indifferent success. Some have already fallen a sacrifice to their valour; none have yet succeeded in gaining a footing on deck, while the marines are resisting with their bayonets the thrusts of the boarding pikes which are protruded through the ports. Courtenay has not yet boarded in the barge, for on pulling up on the quarter he perceived that, on the larboard side of the vessel, the boarding nettings had either been neglected to be properly triced up, or had been cut away by the fire from the boats. He has pushed alongside to take advantage of the opening, and the two cutters have followed him. They board with little resistance—the enemy are too busy repelling the attacks on the other side—and as his men pour upon the privateer's deck, the crews of the launch and pinnace,

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tired with their vain endeavours to divide the nettings, and rendered desperate by their loss, have run up the fore and main rigging above the nettings and thrown themselves down, cutlass in hand, into the *mêlée* below, careless of the points of the weapons which may meet them in their descent. Now is the struggle for life or death!

Courtenay, who was daring as man could be, but not of a very athletic frame, reclinced from the main chains of the vessel, into which he had already once fallen, from one of his own seamen having inadvertently made use of his shoulder as a step to assist his own ascent. He was overtaken by Robinson, the coxswain of the cutter, who sprang up with all the ardour and activity of an English sailor who "meant mischief," and pleased with the energy of his officer (forgetting at the moment the respect due to his rank), called out to him by the sobriquet with which he had been christened by the men—"Bravo, Little Bilious! that's your sort."

"What's that, sir?" cried Courtenay, making a spring so as to stand on the plane-sheer of the vessel at the same moment with the coxswain, and seizing him by the collar—"I say, Robinson, what do you mean by calling me 'Little Bilious'?" continued the lieutenant, wholly regardless of the situation they were placed in. The coxswain looked at him with surprise, and at the same moment parried off with his cutlass a thrust of a pike at Courtenay, which in all probability would otherwise have prevented his asking any more questions; then without making any answer, sprang down on the deck into the midst of the affray.

"You, Robinson, come back," cried Courtenay after him. "D—d annoying—Little Bilious, indeed!" continued he, as, following the example of the coxswain, he proceeded to vent his bile, for the present, on the heads of the Frenchmen.

In most instances of boarding, but more especially in boarding small vessels, there is not much opportunity for what is termed hand-to-hand fighting. It is a rush for the deck; breast to breast, thigh to thigh, foot to foot, man wedged against man, so pressed on by those behind that there is little possibility of using your cutlass except by driving your antagonist's teeth down his throat with the hilt. Gunshot wounds, of course, take place throughout the whole



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of the combat, but those from the sabre and the cutlass are generally given and received before the close, or after the resistance of one party has yielded to the pertinacity and courage of the other. The crews of the barge and cutters having gained possession of the deck in the rear of the enemy, the affair was decided much sooner than it otherwise would have been; for the French fought with desperation, and were commanded by a most gallant and enterprising captain. In three minutes the crew of the privateer were either beaten below or forced overboard, and the colours hauled down from the mast-heads announced to Captain M—— and the rest of the *Aspasia's* crew the welcome intelligence that the privateer was in the possession of their gallant shipmates. The hatches were secured, and the panting Englishmen for a few minutes desisted from their exertions that they might recover their breath; after which Price gave directions for the cables and hawser to be cut, and the boats to go ahead and tow the vessel out.

"They are firing musketry from the shore; they've just hit one of our men," said the coxswain of the pinnace.

"Then cast off, and bring your gun to bear astern. If you do not hit them, at least they will not be so steady in their aim. As soon as we are out of musket-shot, pull out to us."

The order was executed, whilst the other boats towed the privateer towards the frigate. In a few minutes they were out of musket-shot; the pinnace returned, and they had leisure to examine into the loss which they had sustained in the conflict.

The launch had suffered most; nine of her crew were either killed or wounded. Three seamen and four marines had suffered in the other boats. Twenty-seven of the privateer's men were stretched on the decks, either dead or unable to rise. Those who had not been severely hurt had escaped below with the rest of the crew.

Price was standing at the wheel, his sabre not yet sheathed, with Courtenay at his side, when his inveterate habit returned, and he commenced—

"'I do remember, when the fight was done——'"

"So do I, and devilish glad that it's over," cried Jerry, coming forward from the taffrail with a cutlass in hand,

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which, although he could wield, he could certainly not have done much execution with.

"Why, how came you here, Mr. Jerry?" inquired Courtenay.

"Oh! Stewart brought me in his boat, with the hopes of getting rid of me; but I shall live to plague him yet."

"You are not hurt, Seymour, I hope?" said Price to our hero, who now joined the party, and whose clothes were stained with blood.

"No," replied Seymour, smiling. "It's not my blood—it's Stewart's. I have been binding up his head; he has a very deep cut on the forehead, and a musket-ball in his neck, but I think neither of the wounds is of much consequence."

"Where is he?"

"In the cutter. I desired them to put the wounded men in her, out of the launch, and to pull on board at once. Was not I right?"

"Yes, most assuredly. I should have thought of it myself."

"Well, Jerry," said Seymour, laughing, "how many did you——"

"I did not count them; but if you meet with any chaps with deeper wounds than usual, put them down to me. Do you know, Mr. Price, you are more indebted to me than you may imagine for the success of this affair?"

"How, Mr. Jerry? I should like to know, that I may prove my gratitude; 'eleven out of the thirteen' you paid, I've no doubt."

"It was not altogether that—I frightened them more than I hurt them; for when they would have returned the blows from this stalwart arm," said Jerry, holding out the member in question, which was about the thickness of a large carrot, "I immediately turned edgeways to them, and was invisible. They thought that they had to deal with either a ghost or a magician, and, depend upon it, it unnerved them."

"Approach thou like'—what is it?" resumed Price; "something—'Hence, horrible shadow, unreal mockery, hence!'"

"Pretty names to be called in reward of my services," cried Jerry. "I presume this is a specimen of the gratitude you were talking about. Well, after all, to take a leaf out of your book, Mr. Price, I consider that the better part of valour is discretion. Now, that fellow Stewart, he actually gave them his head to play with, and I am not sorry that

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he has had it broken, for I calculate that I shall be saved at least a dozen thrashings by some of his hot blood being let out—‘the King’s poor cousin!’”

“By-the-bye, I quite forgot—where’s Robinson, the coxswain of the cutter?” demanded Courtenay.

“Between the guns forward—seriously hurt, poor fellow, I am afraid,” answered Seymour.

“I’m very sorry for that—I’ll go and see him—I wish to speak with him,” replied Courtenay, walking forward.

Robinson was lying near the long brass gun, which was pointed out of the foremost port, his head pillowed upon the body of the French captain, who had fallen by his hand just before he had received his mortal wound. A musket-ball had entered his groin and divided the iliac artery; he was bleeding to death—nothing could save him. The cold perspiration on his forehead and the glassy appearance of his eye too plainly indicated that he had but a few minutes to live. Courtenay, shocked at the condition of the poor fellow, who was not only the most humorous, but one of the ablest seamen in the ship, knelt down on one knee beside him and took his hand.

“How do you feel, Robinson? are you in much pain?”

“None at all, sir, thank ye,” replied the man faintly; “but the purser may chalk me down *DD.* as soon as he pleases. I suppose he’ll cheat government out of our day’s grub though,” continued the man, with a smile.

Courtenay, aware of the truth of the first observation, thought it no kindness to attempt to deceive a dying man with hopes of recovery in his last moments; he therefore continued: “Can I be of any service to you, Robinson? Is there anything I can do when you are gone?”

“Nothing at all, sir. I’ve neither chick nor child, nor relation that I know of. Yes, there is one thing, sir, but it’s on the bloody side: the key of the mess chest is in my trousers pocket; I wish you’d recollect to have it taken out and given to John Williams—you must wait till I’m dead, for I can’t turn myself just now.”

“It shall be attended to,” replied Courtenay.

“And, Mr. Courtenay, remember me to the captain.”

“Is there anything else?” continued Courtenay, who perceived that the man was sinking rapidly.

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"Nothing—nothing, sir," replied Robinson very faintly. "Good-bye, God bless you, sir; I'm going fast now."

"But, Robinson," said Courtenay, in a low, soothing voice, bending nearer to him, "tell me, my good fellow—I am not the least angry—tell me, why did you call me 'Little Bilius'?"

The man turned his eyes up to him, and a smile played upon his features, as if he were pleased with the idea of disappointing the curiosity of his officer. He made no answer; his head fell back, and in a few seconds he had breathed his last.

"Poor fellow, he is gone!" said Courtenay with a deep sigh, as he rose up from the body. "Never answered my question too. Well," continued he, as he walked slowly aft, "now that's what I consider to be most excessively annoying."

By this time the privateer had been towed under the stern of the frigate, and a hawser was sent on board to secure her astern. Price and the other officers returned on board, where they were well received by Captain M——, who thanked them for their exertions. The wounded had been some time under the hands of Macallan, and fresh crews having been ordered into the boats, they returned to the privateer. The hatches were taken off and the prisoners removed to the frigate.

The name of the prize was the *Estelle*, of two hundred tons burthen, mounting fourteen guns, and having on board, at the commencement of the attack, her full complement of one hundred and twenty-five men.

## CHAPTER XXXII

Many with trust, with doubt few are undone.

LORD BROOK.

Doubt wisely : in strange way

To stand inquiring right, is not to stray ;

To run wrong, is.

DONNE.

WHEN the hatches were taken off on board of the privateer, the prisoners, as they came up, were handed into the boats. Jerry stood at the hatchway, with his cutlass in his hand, making his sarcastic remarks upon them as they

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appeared. A short interval had elapsed after it was supposed that everybody had come from below, when a tall, thin personage, in the dress of a landsman, crawled up the hatchway.

"Halloo!" cried Jerry; "Mr. Longtogs, who have we here? Why, he must be the *padre*. I say, mounseer, *je* very much suspect *que vous êtes* what they call a Father Confessor, *n'est-ce pas?* Devilish good idea. A privateer with a parson! What's your pay, mounseer?—a tenth, of course. Little enough too for looking after the souls of such a set of d—d rascals. Well, mounseer, *vous êtes prisonnier*, without benefit of clergy, so hop into that boat. Why, confound it, here's another!" continued Jerry, as a second made his appearance. "He's the clerk, of course, as he follows the parson. Come, Mont' Arrivo Jack! What a cock-eye the rascal has!"

During this elegant harangue, which was certainly meant for his own amusement more than for their edification, as Jerry had no idea but that they were belonging to the privateer, and of course could not comprehend him, both the parties looked at him, and at each other, with astonishment, until the first who had appeared addressed the latter with, "I say, Paul, did you ever see such a thing before? D—n it, why he's like a sixpenny fife—more noise than substance."

Jerry at once perceived his mistake, and recollected that the master of the vessel which they had boarded had mentioned that two English merchants had been taken out of her by the privateer with the hopes of ransom; but nettled with the remark which had been made, he retorted with—

"Well, I'd recommend you not to attempt to play upon me, that's all."

"No, I don't mean, for I should only make you squeak"

"You are the two gentlemen who were detained by the privateer, I presume," said Pearce, the master, who had come on board to superintend the necessary arrangements previous to her being sent in.

"We are, sir, and must introduce ourselves. My name is Mr. Peter Capon; that of my friend, designated by that young gentleman as Cock-eye, is Mr. Paul Contract. Will

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you oblige us with a boat to go on board of the frigate, that we may speak to the captain?"

"Most certainly. Jump into the first cutter there. I am sorry you have been so unpleasantly situated, gentlemen. Why did not you come on deck before?"

Peter did not state the real ground, which was to secure their property, which was below, from being plundered by the privateer's crew; but wishing to pay off Jerry for his impertinence, replied—

"Why, we did look up the hatchway several times, but there was something so awful, and, I may say so, un-English-like, in the appearance of that officer, with his drawn sword, that we were afraid; we could not imagine into whose hands the vessel had fallen—we thought it had been captured by the Yahoos."

"Houyhnhnms, more likely. You'll find I'm a bit of a horse," replied Jerry, in a passion.

"By Jove, then, you're only fit for the hounds," observed the gentleman with oblique vision; "I should order you——"

"Would you? Well, now I'll order you, sir," replied the youngster, whose anger made him quite forget the presence of his commanding officer—"have the goodness to step into that boat."

"And I shall order you, Mr. J——," observed the master, with asperity—"I order you to go into that boat, and take these gentlemen on board, and to hold your tongue."

"Ay, ay, sir. This way, sir," said Jerry to Mr. Peter, making him a polite bow, and pointing to the boat at the gangway; "in that direction, sir, if you please," continued Jerry, bowing to Mr. Paul, and pointing to the quarter of the vessel.

"And why in that direction, sir?" observed Paul; "I am going on board of the frigate."

"I know it, sir; it was considerate on my part: I was allowing for the angle of obliquity in your vision. You would have exactly fetched the boat."

The indignation of Mr. Paul was now at its height; and Pearce, the master, who was much annoyed at Jerry's excessive impertinence, which he knew Captain M—— would never have overlooked, detained the boat for a minute while he wrote a few lines to Price, requesting him to send the



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bearer of it to the masthead, upon delivery, for his impertinent conduct. "Mr. J——, take this on board, and deliver it from me to the commanding officer."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Jerry. "Shove off there, forward."

Mr. Peter looked Jerry earnestly in his face for some time as they were pulling on board.

"Well now, d—n it, I like you, if it's only for your excessive impudence."

"A negative sort of commendation, but I believe it the only one that he has," replied the other, in a surly tone.

"Highly flattered, sir," replied Jerry to Mr. Peter, "that you should perceive anything to induce you to like me; but I am sorry I cannot return the compliment, for I really cannot perceive anything to like you for. As for your friend there, I can only say that I detest all *crooked* ways.—In bow forward!—way enough. Now, gentlemen, with your permission, I'll show you the road," said the youngster, climbing up the side.

Jerry, who had some suspicion that the note was not in his favour, took the liberty, as it was neither sealed nor wafered, of reading it under the half-deck while Price was showing the two gentlemen into the cabin. Not to deliver a note on service was an offence for which Captain M—— would have dismissed him from the ship; but to be perched up, like a monkey, at the masthead, in the afternoon, after having fought like a man in the morning, was very much against the grain. At any other time he would have cared little about it. He went upon deck again, where he found Prose on the gangway. "Well, Prose, my boy, how are you?"

"Why, upon my soul, Jerry, I am tired to death. Seven times have I been backward and forward to that abominable privateer, and now my tea is ready, and I am ordered to go again for these gentlemen's things."

"Well, that is hard. I will go for you, Prose, shall I? Where's the boat?"

"All ready, alongside. Well, now, it's very kind of you, Jerry, I do declare."

Jerry laid hold of the man-ropes, and began to descend the side; and then, as if recollecting himself of a sudden, said, "Oh, by-the-bye, I had nearly forgot. Here's a note from the master to Mr. Price. Give it him, Prose."

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"Yes, Jerry, I will," replied Prose, walking over to the side of the quarter-deck where Price was carrying on the duty, while Jerry made all the haste he could, and shoved off in the boat.

"A note, sir, from Mr. Pearce, the master."

"Hum," said Price, running it over. "Mr. Prose, go up to the masthead, and stay there till I call you down."

"Sir!" replied Prose, aghast.

"No reply, sir—up immediately."

"Why, sir, it was——"

"Another word, sir, and I'll keep you there all night," cried Price, walking forward in furtherance of the duty he was carrying on.

"Well, now, I do declare! What have I done?" said Prose, with a whimpering voice, as he reluctantly ascended the main-rigging, not unperceived by Jerry, who was watching the result as he pulled on board of the privateer.

"Come on board for these gentlemen's clothes, sir," said Jerry, reporting himself to Mr. Pearce, who, not a little surprised to see him, inquired—

"Did Mr. Price receive my note?"

"Yes, sir, he did."

"Why, I requested him to masthead you!"

"Many thanks, sir, for your kindness," replied the youngster, touching his hat.

Pearce, who was annoyed that his request should not have been complied with, stated his feelings on the subject to Price when he returned to the ship in the evening.

Price declared that he had sent Prose to the masthead, and had not called him down until eight o'clock. The affair was thus explained, and Jerry was pardoned for the ingenuity of his *ruse de guerre*; while all the comfort that was received by the unfortunate Prose was being informed, on the ensuing morning, that it was all a mistake.

The prize being now ready, Captain M—— desired Courtenay to take charge of it, and select two of the midshipmen to accompany him. His choice fell upon Seymour and Jerry; the latter being selected rather for his own amusement than for his qualities as an officer. The distance to Jamaica, to which island he was directed to proceed, and from thence with his crew to obtain a passage to Barbadoes, was not

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great, and Captain M—— did not like to have the frigate short-manned; he was therefore not allowed to take more than ten seamen with him, five prisoners being sent on board to assist in navigating the vessel. Mr. Capon and Mr. Contract, at their own request, went as passengers.

In the afternoon, as soon as the provisions were on board, Courtenay received his written orders, and in a few hours the frigate was out of sight. They had barely time to stow away everything in its place and make the necessary arrangements, when a heavy N.E. swell, and lowering horizon, predicted a continuance of the fair wind, and plenty of it. So it proved; the wind increased rapidly, and the men found it difficult to reduce the canvas in sufficient time. Before dark the wind blew with considerable force, not steadily, but in fitful gusts; and the sun, as he descended in the wave, warned them, by his red and fiery aspect, to prepare for an increase of the gale. The schooner flew before it under her diminished sail, rolling gunwale-to in the deep trough, or lurching heavily as her weather-quarter was borne up aloft by the culminating swell. All was secured for the night; the watch was set, and Seymour walked the deck, while Courtenay and the rest went below, and at an early hour retired to their beds.

Among other reasons for selecting our hero as one of his assistants, Courtenay was influenced by his perfect knowledge of the French language, which might prove useful in communicating with the French prisoners who were sent on board to assist in working the vessel. Jerry had also boasted of his talent in that way, as he wished to go in the prize; and although the reader, from the specimen which he has had, may not exactly give credit to his assertions, yet Courtenay, who had never heard him, believed that he was pretty well acquainted with the language.

But soon after they had parted with the frigate, when Courtenay desired the French prisoners to lay hold of the ropes and assist in shortening sail, they all refused. Seymour was not on deck at the time; he had been desired to superintend the arrangements below; and although he had been informed of their conduct, he had not yet spoken to the prisoners. Two of them were sitting aft under the lee of the weather-bulwark, as Seymour was walking the deck to

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and fro. They were in earnest conversation when Seymour stopped near to them, carelessly leaning over the weather-quarter, watching the long following seas, when he overheard one say to the other—" *Taisez, peut-être qu'il nous entend.*" " *Nous verrons,*" replied the other, who immediately rose and addressed Seymour in French relative to the weather. What he had previously heard induced our hero to shake his head and continue to look over the weather-quarter, and as Seymour only answered in the English negative to a further interrogation, the prisoners did not think it worth while to remove out of his hearing, but satisfied with his not being able to comprehend them, sat down again and resumed their conversation. The lurching of the vessel was a sufficient reason for not walking the deck; but Seymour, to remove all suspicion, took another turn or two, and then again held on by the ropes close by the Frenchmen. The wind blew too fresh to permit him to catch more than an occasional sentence or two of their conversation; but what he heard made him more anxious to collect more.

" *Ils ne sont que seize, avec ce petit misère,*" observed one, " *et nous sommes—*" Here the rest of the sentence was lost. Seymour reckoned up the English on board, and found that, with Billy Pitts, whom Macallan had allowed Courtenay to take with him as his steward, they exactly amounted to that number. The latter epithet he considered, justly enough, to be bestowed upon his friend Jerry. A few minutes afterwards he intercepted—"They'll throw us overboard if we do not succeed; we'll throw them overboard if we do." " *Courage, mon ami, il n'y aura pas de difficulté; nous sommes trop forts,*" replied the other, as, terminating their conversation, they rose and walked forward.

It was evident to our hero that something was in agitation; but at the same time it appeared perfectly incomprehensible that six prisoners should have even formed the idea of attempting the recapture of a vessel manned with sixteen Englishmen, and that they should consider themselves so strong as to ensure success. Determined to report what he had heard to Courtenay, Seymour walked the remainder of his watch, was relieved, and went below to his hammock.

The wind had increased during the night; but as it was fair, and the sky clear, and the sun shone bright, the breeze

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was rather a matter of congratulation when they met at breakfast in the morning, although Peter and Paul complained of the violent motion of the vessel having taken away their appetite. Seymour reported to Courtenay the fragments of the conversation which he had overheard; and insane as appeared to be the idea of recapture, the latter agreed with him that it demanded caution on their parts; but as it would appear very opposite to the English character to take open measures against six prisoners, when they were so numerous, he contented himself with desiring all the arms and ammunition to be stowed in the cabin, and gave orders that the prisoners, as they refused to work, should not be allowed to come on deck after dusk, and then gave the affair no further thought. Seymour was aware that, although it was his duty to report the circumstance, he had no right to press the matter upon Courtenay, who was to be supposed the best judge; still he was not satisfied. He had an unaccountable foreboding that all was not right. He turned the subject in his mind until dinner was announced by Billy Pitts, which put an end to his reverie.

The violent jerking motion of the vessel made it no easy task to retain a position at table, which was securely lashed. As for placing on it the whole of the dinner at once, decanters, &c., that would have been certain destruction; a plate and spoon for their soup was all which Billy Pitts, who was major-domo, would trust them with. Paul, who was not the best sailor in the world, had secured to himself the seat to windward, and it consequently fell to his lot to help the pea-soup, which was placed at the weather-side of the table. To save time and breakage—two important things in a sea-mess—they all held their own plates, which they thrust in towards the tureen from the different quarters of the table to receive their supply. Paul, having helped those nearest to him, rose from his chair that he might see to fill the plates on the other side of the tureen. He was leaning over, his centre of gravity being considerably beyond the perpendicular, when a heavy sea struck the vessel and threw her nearly on her beam-ends, pitching Paul right over the table to leeward. With the tureen, which he did not forget to take with him, he flew into Jerry's arms, and they rolled together on the floor. The contents of the tureen were

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rapidly deposited in the open bosom of Jerry, who disengaged himself from the embraces of his enemy as fast as he could, amidst the laughter of his companions.

"Well, you asked for soup," observed Courtenay.

"Yes, and my friend has helped me very liberally," replied Jerry, who was not at all out of humour, except when he was foiled with his own weapons. In the meantime, Paul, who was a little stunned with the blow he had received on his head, had continued on the floor rolling in the pea-soup, and was just attempting to get on his legs.

"You've got it all to yourself there, Mr. Paul. As you seem to like it, perhaps you would prefer a spoon," said Jerry, offering him one at the same time.

"I say, Paul, what a capital harlequin you would make," observed Peter.

Paul, who had recovered his legs, and now clung on by the table, looked an answer horribly asquint, as if he did not admire the joke; but he resumed his seat at the table.

The remainder of the dinner was brought down without further accident occurring; and by the time it was over, as the bottle had to be passed round, and everybody was obliged to drink off immediately, and put his wine-glass inside his waistcoat to save it from perdition, they all were very merry and happy before the repast had been concluded. "There," said Jerry, stroking himself down when he had finished his cheese, as if he were a Falstaff, "a kitten might play with me now."

"More than one dare do with me," rejoined Peter, "for I'm cursedly inclined to *shoot the cat*."

But as the second evening closed in, the sky was loaded with heavy clouds—the scud flew wildly past them—the sea increased to mountains high—and the gale roared through the rigging of the schooner, which was now impelled before it under bare poles. They were really in danger. The hatches were battened down fore and aft—the ports were knocked out to allow the escape of the water, which poured over in such volumes as would otherwise have swamped the vessel—and Courtenay and his crew remained on deck until dawn of day, when the violence of the gale seemed to have abated.

Courtenay desired Seymour and Jerry to turn in, and



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relieve him at eight o'clock. Our hero and Jerry went down into the cabin, where they found the two passengers, who, although they had not come on deck during the night, had not retired to bed. Peter was sitting up to windward on the locker, looking very pale and very seasick. Paul was on the cabin-floor, with one hand holding on by the leg of the table, and a bottle of brandy in the other. His prayer-book he had abandoned during a fright, and it was washing about in the lee-scuppers. Jerry was delighted, but put on a rueful face.

"Well," observed Paul, who was nearly frightened out of his wits, "how is it now?"

"Worse and worse," replied Jerry; "there's nine inches water in the well."

"Oh, my God!" cried Paul, who was not very *au fait* at nautical technicalities—raising one eye up to heaven, while the other appeared to rest upon the bottle of brandy.

"But why don't you turn in?" said Jerry; "we can go to the bottom just as comfortably in bed as anywhere else."

"I agree with you," replied Peter, who had often been at sea, and knew very well that all was right by the two midshipmen coming off deck. "My mother prophesied that I never should die in my bed, but I'm determined that I will."

"You had better turn in, Mr. Paul," said Seymour kindly; "I'll ring for the steward."

Billy Pitt made his appearance. "By gad, gentlemen, the d—d schooner under water."

"Under water!" cried Paul, with dismay. The bottle was applied to his mouth, as if he was determined to leave as little room as possible for the element which he expected instantaneously to be struggling in.

With the assistance of Billy, Paul was placed in one of the standing bed-places at the side of the cabin. Jerry put his brandy-bottle at the side of his pillow; kindly informing him that he would have an opportunity of taking a few more swigs before he went down, for the water was only up to her bends at present. Peter was already in the cot next to him, and Seymour and Jerry turned in, without taking off their clothes, in Courtenay's bed on the

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other side of the cabin. Before they had fallen asleep, they heard Paul cry out, "Peter! Peter!"

"Well, what do you want?"

"Do you think there are any hopes?"

Peter, who wished to frighten his companion, replied gravely, "I am afraid not; but, Paul, I've just been reflecting upon the subject. Here we are, two men considerably on the wrong side of forty. We have enjoyed our youth, which is the happiest period of our life. We are now fast descending the hill to old age, decrepitude, and disease—what avails a few more years, allowing that we are spared this time? Don't you perceive the *comfort* of my observations?"

Paul groaned, and made no answer; but even the creaking of the timbers could not disguise the repeated creak-creack-creack as the brandy from the bottle gurgled down his throat.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

Two striplings, lads more like to run  
Than to commit such slaughter.

*Cymbeline.*

THE gales of wind in the tropical climates are violent while they last, but are seldom of long duration. Such was the case in the present instance; for it subsided in a few hours after daylight; and the schooner, that had been propelled before it, was now sheltered under the lee of the island of St. Domingo, and, with all her canvas spread, was gliding through a tranquil sea. Again they were collected round the dinner table, to a more quiet repast than they had hitherto enjoyed since they had come on board. Paul had not quite recovered his spirits, although when he went on deck, just before the dinner was announced, he was delighted at the sudden change which had taken place; but the mirth of his companions at his expense was not received in very good part.

After dinner finding himself in a better humour, he

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turned to Peter, and addressed him—"I say, Peter, I made no answer to your remarks last night, when we expected to go down; but I have since had time deliberately to weigh your arguments, and I should like you to explain to me where the *comfort* was that you so strenuously pointed out, for hang me if I can discover it."

Seymour again had charge of the first watch; and notwithstanding that the orders for the prisoners to remain below after dark had been communicated to them, he observed that, on one pretence or other, they occasionally came on deck, and repeatedly put their heads above the hatchway. This conduct reminded him of the conversation which he had overheard, and again it was the subject of his thoughts. Captain M—— had one day observed to him that if there was no duty going on, he could not employ himself in a more useful manner when he was walking the deck than by placing himself, or the ship, in difficult situations, and reflecting upon the most eligible means of relief. "Depend upon it," observed Captain M——, "the time will come when you will find it of use to you; and it will create for you a presence of mind, in a sudden dilemma, which may be the salvation of yourself and the ship you are in."

Seymour, remembering this injunction, reflected upon what would be the most advisable steps to take in case of the French prisoners attempting to recapture during his watch on deck. That there were but six it was very true; but at the same time, during the night watches there were but five English seamen and the officer of the watch on deck. Should the Frenchmen have the boldness to attempt to regain possession of the vessel, there was no doubt that, if the watch could be surprised, the hatches would be secured over those below. What should be the steps, in such a case, that he ought to take?

Such were the cogitations of Seymour when midnight was reported, and Jerry was summoned to relieve the deck—which he did not do, relying upon our hero's good-nature, until past one bell. Up he came with his ready apology, "I really beg your pardon, my dear fellow, but I had not a wink of sleep last night."

"Never mind, Jerry, I am not at all sleepy. I had been

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thinking about these French prisoners—I cannot get their conversation out of my head.”

“Why, I did not like it myself when I heard of it,” replied Jerry. “I hope they won’t attempt it in my watch; it would not give them much trouble to launch me over the quarter—I should skim away, ‘flying light,’ like a lady’s bonnet.”

“What would you do, Jerry, if you perceived them rushing aft to retake the vessel?” inquired Seymour, who was aware of his ready invention.

“Skim up the rigging like a lamplighter, to be sure. Not that it would be of much use if they gained the day, except to say a few prayers before I went astern.”

“Well, that was my idea; but I thought that if one had a musket and ammunition up there, a diversion might be created in favour of those below—for the prisoners have no firearms.”

“Very true,” replied Jerry; “we might puzzle them not a little.”

“Now, Jerry, suppose we were to take that precaution, for I do not like their manœuvres during my watch. It will do no harm, if it does no good. Suppose you fetch two muskets and cartouch-boxes from the cabin—I’ll take one and secure it in the fore-cross-trees, and you do the same at the main; for Courtenay is too proud to keep an armed watch.”

Jerry agreed to the proposal, and brought up the muskets and ammunition. Seymour gave him a stout *fox* to lash the musket; and taking another himself, they both ascended the rigging at the same time, and were busy securing the muskets up and down at the head of the lower masts, when they heard a sudden rush upon deck beneath them.

It was dark, though not so dark but they could distinguish what was going on, and they perceived that their thoughts had but anticipated the reality. “The French are up!” roared the man at the wheel, to rouse those below, as well as the watch, who were lying about the decks; but to the astonishment of the youngsters aloft, as well as of the men on deck, not six, but about twenty Frenchmen, armed with cutlasses, made their appearance. The hatches were over and secured in a minute; and the unarmed English on deck

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were then attacked by the superior force. It was with agonised feelings that Seymour and Jerry heard the scuffle which took place; it was short; and plunge after plunge into the water, alongside, announced the death of each separate victim. The man at the wheel struggled long; he was of an athletic frame; but overpowered by numbers, he was launched over the taffrail. The French, supposing that the remainder of the crew were below, placed sentries over the hatches, that they might not be forced, and then collected together abaft, altering the course of the vessel for St. Domingo.

It will be necessary to explain the sudden appearance of so many Frenchmen. When the captain of the privateer was occupied during the night previous to the attack with his several plans of defence, he also arranged one for the recapture of the vessel in case of their being overpowered. With this in view, he had constructed a platform in the hold, on which a tier of casks was stowed, and under which there was sufficient space for fifteen or twenty men to lie concealed. When the privateer's men had been driven below, and the hatches secured over them, fifteen, armed with cutlasses, concealed themselves in this place, with the hopes of recapturing the vessel from the prize-master after she should have parted company with the frigate. The prisoners who had been sent on board to assist in navigating the schooner to Jamaica, had communicated with them unperceived after dark. As all the English were fatigued from having been on deck during the previous night, the middle watch was proposed for the attempt, which had thus far been attended with success.

Seymour and Jerry remained quiet at the mastheads; for although they did not attempt to communicate with each other for fear of discovery, they both rightly judged that it would be best to remain till daylight; by which time some plans would have been formed by the party below, which their situation would enable them materially to assist. Nearly four hours elapsed previous to the dawning of the day, during which interval Jerry had ample time to say some of those prayers which he spoke of, and which it was to be supposed that they both did not fail to offer up in their perilous situation.

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As soon as the day began to break, Jerry, who had not yet loaded his musket lest he might be heard, thought it time to prepare for action. He primed, and put in his cartridge, in the ramming down of which a slight ringing of the ramrod against the muzzle attracted the notice of one of the Frenchmen, who, looking up, after a short time, exclaimed, "*Diable ! c'est monsieur misère qui est là !*"

Jerry levelled with a steady aim, and the bullet passed through the broad chest of the Frenchman, who rolled upon the deck.

"Now, they may chant your *miserere*," cried the youngster.

A second shot from the fore-cross-trees laid another Frenchman alongside of his companion.

"*Comment ! diable ! nous serons abimés par ces enfans là ; il faut monter.*"

The muskets were again loaded, and again each boy brought down his bird before the Frenchmen could decide upon their operations. It was a case of necessity that the youngsters should be attacked ; but it was a service of no little danger, and of certain destruction to one, who must fall a sacrifice that the other might be able to secure the youngster before he had time to reload his musket. Two of the most daring flew to the main-rigging, one ascending to windward and the other to leeward. Seymour, who perceived their intentions, reserved his fire until he saw the one in the weather-rigging fall by Jerry's musket ; he then levelled at the one to leeward, who dropped into the lee-chains, and from thence into the sea. Thus had six Frenchmen already fallen by the coolness and determination of two boys, one but fourteen, and the other not sixteen years old.

A short consultation ended in the Frenchmen resorting to the only measures likely to be attended with success. Leaving three to guard the hatchways, the remaining twelve, divided into four parties, began to mount both fore and main-rigging, to windward and to leeward, at the same time. The fate of Jerry and Seymour now appeared to be decided. They might each kill one man more, and then would have been hurled into the sea. But during the consultation, Seymour, who anticipated this movement, and had a knife in his pocket, divided the lanyards of the lee topmast rigging, and running up the weather side with his musket and ammu-



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dition, as soon as he had gained the topmast cross-trees, hauled up the lee rigging after him, thus gaining a position that would admit but one person mounting up to him at a time. He called to Jerry, pointing out what he had done, that he might do the same; but unfortunately Jerry had not a knife, and could not. He contented himself with climbing up to the topmast cross-trees, to which he was followed by two of the Frenchmen. Jerry levelled his musket, and passed his bullet through the skull of one of his pursuers, whose heavy fall on the deck shook the schooner fore and aft; and then, aware that nothing more could be done, pitched his musket overboard that they might not gain possession of it, and climbing with a nimbleness suited to the occasion up to the masthead, descended by the top-gallant stay to the fore-topmast cross-trees, and joined Seymour in the presence of the exasperated Frenchmen, who now, unable to reach either of them, were at a non-plus. "I say, monsieur, no catchee, no habbee," cried Jerry, laughing, and putting his hand to his side from loss of breath.

But we must now acquaint the reader with what is going on below. The surprise of Courtenay when he found the hatches down and the deck in possession of the French, was removed when the men who had been secured with him stated that, as they lay in their hammocks, they had been awakened by a large body of men running up the hatchway. He now perceived that there must have been men concealed in the hold of the vessel. The struggle on deck, the splashing in the water, all had been plainly heard below; they were aware of the fate of their shipmates, and did not expect to see daylight again until they were handed up as prisoners in a French port.

The feelings of Courtenay were not enviable. He upbraided himself for having, by his want of prudence, lost the vessel and sacrificed the lives of the two midshipmen and five seamen who had the watch on deck. The party below consisted of Courtenay, Peter and Paul, Billy Pitts, and five seamen; and a consultation was held as to their proceedings. To regain the vessel and avenge the death of their shipmates, or to perish in the attempt, was the determination of the lieutenant. He was aware that the French

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had no firearms; and amply supplied as they were, he would have cared little for their numbers if once on deck; but how to get on deck was the problem. To set fire to the vessel, and rush up in the flames—to scuttle her—or to blow her up, and all go down together, were each proposed and agitated.

Peter's plan was considered as the most feasible. He suggested that one-half of the cabin table, which was divided in two, should be placed upon the other, so as to raise it up to the coamings of the skylight-hatch; on the upper table to place a pound or two of powder, which, from the ascending principle of explosion, would blow off the skylight and grating without injuring the vessel below. Then, with their muskets loaded and bayonets fixed, to jump on the table, and from thence, if possible, gain the deck. This was agreed to, and the preparations were well forward when the report of Jerry's musket was heard—another succeeded, and they were perplexed. Had the Frenchmen firearms? and if so, what could they be firing at? The falling of the bodies on deck, and the indistinct curses of the Frenchmen, puzzled them even more. "What can it be?" observed Courtenay.

"I recollect now," said Paul, "as I lay awake I saw young devil-skin pass my bed with a musket—I wondered what it was for."

"Then, probably, he has gained the rigging with it, and is safe," cried Courtenay intuitively. "Be quick! Where's the powder? Take that candle further off."

The train was laid as the muskets continued to be discharged; they removed from the cabin;—it was fired, and the skylight was blown up, killing the Frenchman who guarded the hatchway, at the very moment that the Frenchmen were in the rigging, puzzled with the manœuvres of Seymour and the escape of Jerry.

Courtenay and his party rushed into the cabin, mounted the table, and were on deck before the smoke had cleared away; and the Frenchmen, who had not had time to descend the rigging, were at their mercy. Mercy they were not entitled to. They had shown none to the unarmed English, whom they had wantonly thrown into the sea when they had overpowered them, and were now thirsting for the blood of

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the two boys. No mercy was shown to them. As they dropped one by one from the rigging, wounded or dead, they were tossed into the wave, as an expiatory sacrifice to the manes of the murdered Englishmen. In a few minutes the carnage was over. Seymour and Jerry descended from their little fortalice aloft, and were warmly greeted by their friends as they reached the deck.

"Really, Mr. Paul," said Jerry, shaking his proffered hand, "this is quite an unexpected pleasure."

"Well, I never thought that I could possibly like you," answered the other.

"Well," observed Jerry, "it has quite stopped my growth."

"But not your tongue, I hope," replied Peter; "that would be a pity. Now explain to us how it all happened."

Jerry entered into the detail with his accustomed humour, while Courtenay walked aft with Seymour, to have a more sober narrative of the transactions which we have described, and which afforded ample matter for conversation until the prize was brought to an anchor in Port Royal harbour, where Courtenay and his crew were ordered a passage to Barbadoes in a frigate that had orders to proceed there in a few days; and Mr. Peter Capon and Mr. Paul Contract went on shore, declaring that until a mail-coach ran between there and England they would never leave the island and again subject themselves to the charming vicissitudes of a seafaring existence.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

For the execution of all form, observance, ceremony, subordination, and the like, even though, while he compels obedience, he may get himself privately laughed at, commend me to our governor, Don Fabricio.—*Humours of Madrid.*

IN a few days, Courtenay, with the prize crew of the *Aspasia*, sailed for Barbadoes in the frigate which had been ordered to receive them for a passage. The frigate was commanded by one of the most singular characters in the service. He was a clever man, a thorough sailor, and well

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acquainted with the details and technicalities of the profession—a spirited and enterprising officer, but of the most arbitrary disposition. So well was he acquainted with the regulations of the service, that he could hedge himself in so as to ensure a compliance with the most preposterous orders, or draw the officer who resisted into a premunire which would risk his commission.

In a profession where one man is embarked with many, isolated from the power whence he derives his own, where his fiat must be received without a murmur by hundreds who can reason as well as himself, it is absolutely requisite that he should be invested with an authority amounting to despotism. True it is that he is held responsible to his superiors for any undue exercise of this authority; but amongst so many to whom it is confided, there must be some who, from disposition or the bad example of those under whom they have served, will not adhere to the limits which have been prescribed. This, however, is no reason for reducing that authority, which, as you govern wholly by opinion, is necessary for the discipline which upholds the service; but it is a strong reason for not delegating it to those who are not fit to be entrusted.

Captain Bradshaw had many redeeming qualities. Oppressor as he was, he admired a spirit of resistance in an officer when it was shown in a just cause, and, upon reflection, was invariably his friend, for he felt that his own natural temperament was increased by abject obedience. Raynal, I think it is, has said that “the pride of men in office arises as much from the servility of their inferiors or expectants as from any other cause.” In our service they are all inferiors, and all expectants. Can it then be surprising that a captain occasionally becomes tyrannical? But Captain Bradshaw was not naturally tyrannical: he had become so because, promoted at an early age, he had never been afterwards opposed; no one contradicted him; every one applauded his jokes, and magnified his mirth into wit. He would try by a court-martial an officer who had committed a slight error, and on the same day would open his purse and extend his patronage to another whom he knew not, but had been informed that he was deserving, and had no friends. To his seamen he was as lavish with his money as

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he was with the cat. He would give a man a new jacket one day, and cut it to pieces on his back with a rope's end on the next. Yet it was not exactly inconsistency—it was an eccentricity of character, not natural, but created by the service. The graft was of a worse quality than the parent stock, and the fruit was a compound of the two. The sailors, who are of the most forgiving temper in the world, and will pardon a hundred faults for one redeeming quality, declared that “he warn't a bad captain after all.

His violent and tyrannical disposition made him constantly at variance with his officers, and continual changes took place in his ship; but it was observed, that those who had left him from a spirited resistance were kindly received and benefited by his patronage, while those who submitted were neglected. Like a pretty but clever woman, who is aware that flattery is to be despised, and yet, from habit, cannot exist without it, so Captain Bradshaw exacted the servility which he had been accustomed to, yet rewarded not those by whom it was administered. All the midshipmen promoted on the station had to pass through the ordeal of sailing with Captain Bradshaw, who generally had a vacancy; and it certainly had a good effect upon those young men who were inclined to presume upon their newly acquired rank; for they were well schooled before they quitted his ship.

When Courtenay and his party went on board of the frigate, the first lieutenant, master, and surgeon, indignant at language which had been used to them by the captain, refused to dine in the cabin when they were invited by the steward, who reported to Captain Bradshaw that the officers would not accept his invitation.

“Won't they, by G—d? I'll see to that. Send my clerk here.”

The clerk made his appearance with an abject bow.

“Mr. Powell, sit down and write as I dictate,” said Captain Bradshaw, who, walking up and down the fore-cabin, composed a memorandum, in which, after a long preamble, the first lieutenant, master, and surgeon were directed to dine with him every day until further orders. Captain Bradshaw, having signed it, sent for the first lieutenant, and delivered it himself into his hands.

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"Ferguson!—Bradly!" cried the first lieutenant, entering the gun-room with the paper in his hand, "here's something for all three of us—a positive order to dine with the skipper every day until—he gets tired of our company."

"I'll be hanged if I do," replied the surgeon. "I'll put myself in the sick-list."

"And if I am obliged to go, I'll not touch anything," rejoined the master. "There's an old proverb, 'You may lead a horse to the pond, but you can't make him drink.'"

"Whatever we do," replied Roberts, the first lieutenant, "we must act in concert; but I have been long enough in the service to know that we must obey first, and remonstrate afterwards. That this is an unusual order, I grant, nor do I know by what regulations of the service it can be enforced; but at the same time I consider that we run a great risk in refusing to obey it. Only observe, in the preamble, how artfully he inserts 'appearance of a conspiracy, tending to bring him into contempt;' and again, 'for the better discipline of his Majesty's service, which must invariably suffer when there is an appearance of want of cordiality between those to whom the men must look for an example.' Upon my soul, he's devilish clever. I do believe he'd find out a reason for drawing out all our double teeth if he was inclined, and prove it was all for the benefit of his Majesty's service. Well, now, what's to be done?"

"Why, what's your opinion, Roberts?"

"Oh, mine is to go; and if you will act with me, he won't allow us to dine with him a second time."

"Well, then, I agree," replied the surgeon.

"And so must I, then, I presume; but, by heavens, it's downright tyranny and oppression."

"Never mind; listen to me. Let's all go, and all behave as ill as we can—be as unmannerly as bears—abuse everything—be as familiar as possible, and laugh in his face. He cannot touch us for it, if we do not go too far—and he'll not trouble us to come a second time."

Their plans were arranged; and at three o'clock they were ushered into the cabin with one of the midshipmen of the ship and Jerry, who, as a stranger, had been honoured with an invitation. Captain Bradshaw, whose property was equal to his liberality, piqued himself upon keeping a good



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table; his cook was an artiste, and his wines were of the very best quality. After all, there was no great hardship in dining with him, but "upon compulsion!"—no. The officers bowed. The captain, satisfied with their obedience, intended, although he had brought them there by force, to do the honours of his table with the greatest urbanity.

"Roberts," said he, "do me the favour to take the foot of the table. Doctor, here's a chair for you. Mr. Bradly, come round on this side. Now then, steward, off covers and let us see what you have for us. Why, youngster, does your captain starve you?"

"No, sir," replied Jerry, who knew what was going on; "but he don't give me a dinner every day."

"Humph!" muttered the captain, who thought Mr. Jerry very free upon so short an acquaintance.

The soup was handed round; the first spoonful that Roberts took in his mouth he threw out on the snow-white deck, crying out as soon as his mouth was empty, "O Lord!"

"Why, what's the matter?" inquired the captain.

"So cursed hot, I've burnt my tongue."

"Oh, that's all!—steward, wipe up that mess," said the captain, who was rather nice in his eating.

"Do you know Jemmy Cavan, sir, at Barbadoes?" inquired the doctor.

"No, sir, I know no Jemmies," replied Captain Bradshaw, surprised at his familiar address.

"He's a devilish good fellow, sir, I can tell you. When he gets you on shore, he'll make you dine with him every day, whether or not. He'll take no denial."

"Now, that's what I call a d—d good fellow; you don't often meet a chap like him," observed the master.

Captain Bradshaw felt that he was indirectly called a chap, which did not please him.

"Mr. Bradly, will you take some mutton?"

"If you please," said the master.

"Roberts, I'll trouble you to carve the saddle of mutton."

The first lieutenant cut out a slice, and taking it on the fork, looked at it suspiciously, and then held his nose over it.

"Why, what's the matter?"

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"Rather high, sir, I'm afraid."

"Oh, I smell it here," said Jerry, who entered into the joke.

"Indeed! Steward, remove that dish; fortunately, it is not all our dinner. What will you take, Mr. Bradly?"

"Why, really, I seldom touch anything but the joint. I hate your kickshaws, there's so much pawing about them. I'll wait, if you please; in the meantime, I'll drink a glass of wine with you, Captain Bradshaw."

"The devil you will!" was nearly out of the captain's mouth at this reversal of the order of things; but he swallowed it down, and answered in a surly tone, "With great pleasure, sir."

"Come, doctor, let you and I hob and nob," said the first lieutenant. They did so, and clicked their glasses together with such force as to break them both, and spill the wine upon the fine damask table-cloth. Jerry could contain himself no longer, but burst out into a roar of laughter, to the astonishment of Captain Bradshaw, who never had seen a midshipman thus conduct himself at his table before; but Jerry could not restrain his inclination for joining with the party, although he had no excuse for his behaviour.

"Bring some wine-glasses, steward; and you'll excuse me, gentlemen, but I will thank you not to try the strength of them again," said Captain Bradshaw, with a very majestic air.

"Now, Mr. Ferguson, I shall be happy to take a glass of wine with you. What will you have? There's sherry and Moselle."

"I prefer champagne, if you please," answered the surgeon, who knew that Captain Bradshaw did not produce it except when strangers were at the table.

Captain Bradshaw restrained his indignation, and ordered champagne to be brought.

"I'll join you," cried the first lieutenant, shoving in his glass.

"Come, younker, let you and I have a glass cosy together," said Jerry to the midshipman, who, frightened at what was going on, moved his chair a little further from Jerry, and then looked first at him and then at the captain.

"Oh, pray take a glass with the young gentleman," said Captain Bradshaw, with mock politeness.

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"Come, steward, none of your half allowance, if you please," continued the impertinent Jerry. "Now, then, my cock, here's towards you, and 'better luck still.'"

Captain Bradshaw was astonished. "I say, youngster, did Captain M—— ever flog you?"

"No, sir," replied Jerry demurely, perceiving that he had gone too far; "he always treats his officers like gentlemen."

"Then I presume, sir, when they are on board of his ship that they conduct themselves as gentlemen."

This hint made Jerry dumb for some time; the officers, however, continued as before. The surgeon dropped his plate, full of damascene tart, on the deck. The first lieutenant spilt his snuff on the table-cloth, and laid his snuff-box on the table, which he knew to be the captain's aversion; and the master requested a glass of grog, as the rotgut French wines had given him a pain in the bowels. Captain Bradshaw could hardly retain his seat upon the chair, upon which he fidgeted right and left. He perceived that his officers were behaving in a very unusual manner, and that it was with a view to his annoyance; yet it was impossible for him to take notice of breaking glasses, and finding fault with the cookery, which they took care to do, sending their plates away before they had eaten a mouthful with apparent disgust; neither could he demand a court-martial for awkwardness or want of good manners at his own table. He began to think that he had better have left out the "every day until further orders" in the memorandum, as rescinding it immediately would have been an acknowledgment of their having gained the victory; and as to their going on in this way, to put up with it was impossible.

The dinner was over, and the dessert placed on the table. Captain Bradshaw passed the bottles round, helping himself to Madeira. Roberts took claret, and as soon as he had tasted it, "I beg your pardon, Captain Bradshaw," said he, "but this wine is corked."

"Indeed! Take it away, steward, and bring another bottle."

Another was put on the table.

"I hope you will find that better, Mr. Roberts," said the

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captain, who really thought that what he stated had been the case.

"Yes," replied the first lieutenant; "for the description of wine, it's well enough."

"What do you mean, sir? Why, it's Château Margaux of the first growth."

"Excuse me, sir," replied the officer, with an incredulous smile; "they must have imposed upon you."

Captain Bradshaw, who was an excellent judge of wine, called for a glass, and pouring out the claret, tasted it. "I must differ from you, sir; and, moreover, I have no better."

"Then I'll trouble you to pass the port, doctor, for I really cannot drink that stuff."

"Do you drink port, Mr. Bradley?" said the captain, with a countenance as black as a thunder-cloud.

"No, not to-day; I am not well in my inside; but I'll punish the port to-morrow."

"So will I," said the surgeon.

"And as I am not among the privileged," added Jerry, who had already forgotten the hint, "I'll take my whack to-day."

"Perhaps you may," observed the captain drily.

The officers now began to be very noisy, arguing among themselves upon points of service and taking no notice whatever of the captain. The master, in explanation, drew a chart, with wine, upon the polished table, while the first lieutenant defended his opinion with pieces of biscuit, laid at different positions—during which two more glasses were demolished.

The captain rang, and ordered coffee in an angry tone. When the officers had taken it, he bowed stiffly, and wished them good evening.

There was one dish which was an object of abhorrence to Captain Bradshaw. The first lieutenant, aware of it, as they rose to depart, said, "Captain Bradshaw, if it's not too great a liberty, we should like to have some tripe to-morrow. We are all three very partial to it."

"So am I," rejoined Jerry.

Captain Bradshaw could hold out no longer. "Leave the cabin immediately, gentlemen. By heavens, you shall never put your legs under my table again."

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"Are we not to dine here to-morrow, sir?" replied the first lieutenant with affected surprise; "the order says, 'every day.'"

"Till further orders," roared the captain; "and now you have them, for I'll be d—d if ever you dine with me again."

The officers took their departure, restraining their mirth until they gained the gun-room; and Jerry was about to follow, when Captain Bradshaw caught him by the arm.

"Stop, my young gentleman, you've not had your 'whack' yet."

"I've had quite sufficient, sir, I thank you," replied Jerry; "an excellent dinner—many thanks to your hospitality."

"Yes, but I must now give you your dessert."

"I've had my dessert and coffee too, sir," said Jerry, trying to escape.

"But you have not had your *chasse-café*, and I cannot permit you to leave the cabin without it. Steward, desire a boatswain's mate to bring his cat, and a quartermaster to come here with seizings."

Jerry was now in a stew—the inflexible countenance of Captain Bradshaw showed that he was in earnest. However, he held his tongue until the operators appeared, hoping that the captain would think better of it.

"Seize this young gentleman up to the breech of the gun, quartermaster!"

"Will you oblige me, sir, by letting me know my offence!"

"No, sir."

"I do not belong to your ship," continued Jerry. "If I have done wrong, Captain M—— is well known to be a strict officer, and will pay every attention to your complaint."

"I will save him the trouble, sir."

Jerry was now seized up, and every arrangement made preparatory to punishment. "Well, sir," resumed Jerry, "it must be as you please; but I know what Captain M—— will say."

"What, sir?"

"That you were angry with your officers, whom you could not punish, and revenged yourself upon a poor boy."

"Would he? Boatswain's mate, where's your cat?"

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"Here, sir;—how many tails am I to use?"

"Oh, give him the whole nine."

"Why, your honour," replied the man in a compassionate tone, "there's hardly room for them there."

Jerry, who, when his indignation was roused, cared little what he said, and defied consequences, now addressed the captain.

"Captain Bradshaw, before you commence, will you allow me to tell you what I will call you after the first lash?"

"What, sir?"

"What!" cried Jerry, with scorn—"why, if you cut me to pieces, and turn me out of the service afterwards, I will call you a paltry coward, and your own conscience, when you are able to reflect, will tell you the same."

Captain Bradshaw started back with astonishment at such unheard-of language from a midshipman; but he was pleased with the undaunted spirit of the boy—perhaps he felt the truth of the observation. At all events, it saved Jerry. After a short pause the captain said—

"Cast him loose; but observe, sir, never let me see your face again while you are in the ship!"

"No, nor any other part of me, if I can help it," replied Jerry, buttoning up his clothes, and making a precipitate escape by the cabin-door.

## CHAPTER XXXV

The air no more was vital now,

But did a mortal poison grow.

The lungs, which used to fan the heart,

Served only now to fire each part;

What should refresh, increased the smart. }

And now their very breath,

The chiefest sign of life, became the cause of death!

SPRAT, *Bishop of Rochester.*

THE *Aspasia* did not drop her anchor in Carlisle Bay until three weeks after the arrival of the frigate which brought up Courtenay and the prize crew; but she had not been idle, having three valuable prizes, which she had captured in



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company. Courtenay immediately repaired on board of his ship, to report to Captain M—— the circumstances which had occurred connected with the loss of his five men. He was too honourable to attempt to disguise or palliate the facts; on the contrary, he laid all the blame upon himself, and enhanced the merits of the two midshipmen. Captain M——, who admired his ingenuous confession, contented himself with observing that he trusted it would be a caution to him during his future career in the service. To Seymour and Jerry he said nothing, as he was afraid that the latter would presume upon commendation; but he treasured up their conduct in his memory, and determined to lose no opportunity that might offer to reward them. Courtenay descended to the gun-room, where he was warmly greeted by his messmates, who crowded round him to listen to his detail of the attempt to recapture.

"Well," observed Price, "it appears we have had a narrow chance of losing a messmate."

"Narrow chance lose two, sar," replied Billy Pitts; "you forgit, sar, I on board schooner!"

"Oh, Billy, are you there? How does the dictionary come on?"

"Come on well, sar; I make a corundum on Massa Doctor when on board schooner."

"Made a what?—a corundum! What can that be?"

"It ought to be something devilish hard," observed Courtenay.

"Yes, sar, debblish hard find out. Now, sar—why Massa Macallan like a general?"

"I'm sure I can't tell. We give it up, Billy."

"Then, sar, I tell you. Because he *feelossifer*."

"Bravo, Billy! Why, you'll write a book soon. By-the-bye, Macallan, I must not forget to thank you for the loan of that gentleman; he has made himself very useful, and behaved very well."

"Really, Massa Courtenay, I tought I not give you satisfaction."

"Why so, Billy?"

"Because, sar, you never give me present—not one dollar."

"He has you there," said Price; "you must fork out."

"Not a rap—the nigger had perquisites. I saw the

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English merchants give him a handful of dollars before they left the vessel."

"Ah! they real gentlemen, Massa Capon and Massa —— dam'um name—I forgot."

"And what am I, then, you black thief?"

"Oh! you, sar, you very fine officer," replied Billy, quitting the gun-room.

Courtenay did not exactly like the answer—but there was nothing to lay hold of. As usual, when displeased, he referred to his snuff-box, muttering something, in which the word "annoying" could only be distinguished.

The breeze from the windsail blew some of the snuff out of the box into the eyes of Macallan.

"I wish to heaven you would be more careful, Courtenay," cried the surgeon, in an angry tone, and stamping with the pain.

"I really beg your pardon," replied Courtenay; "snuffing's a vile habit—I wish I could leave it off."

"So do your messmates," replied the surgeon; "I cannot imagine what pleasure there can be in a practice in itself so nasty, independent of the destruction of the olfactory powers."

"It's exactly for that reason that I take snuff; I am convinced that I am a gainer by the loss of the power of smell."

"I consider it ungrateful, if not wicked, to say so," replied the surgeon gravely. "The senses were given to us as a source of enjoyment."

"True, doctor," answered Courtenay, mimicking the language of Macallan; "and if I were a savage in the woods, there could not be a sense more valuable, or affording so much gratification, as the one in question. I should rise with the sun, and inhale the fragrance of the shrubs and flowers, offered up in grateful incense to their Creator, and I should stretch myself under the branches of the forest tree, as evening closed, and enjoy the faint perfume with which they wooed the descending moisture after exhaustion from the solar heat. But in civilised society, where men and things are packed too closely together, the case is widely different; for one pleasant, you encounter twenty offensive smells; and of all the localities for villainous compounds, a ship is indubitably the worst. I therefore patronise 'baccy,'

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which, I presume, was intended for our use, or it would not have been created."

"But not for our abuse."

"Ah! there's the rock that we all split upon—and I, with others, must plead guilty. The greatest difficulty in this world is, to know when and where to stop. Even a philosopher like yourself cannot do it. You allow your hypothesis to whirl in your brain, until it forms a vortex which swallows up everything that comes within its influence. A modern philosopher, with his hypothesis, is like a man possessed with a devil in times of yore; and it is not to be cast out by any human means that I know of."

"As you please," replied Macallan, laughing; "I only deprecated a bad habit."

"An hypothesis is only a habit—a habit of looking through a glass of one peculiar colour, which imparts its hue to all around it. We are but creatures of habit. Luxury is nothing more than contracting fresh habits, and having the means of administering to them—*ergo*, doctor, the more habits you have to gratify, the more luxuries you possess. You luxuriate in the contemplation of Nature—Price in quoting, or trying to quote, Shakspeare—Billy Pitts in his dictionary—I in my snuff-box; and surely we may all continue to enjoy our harmless propensities without interfering with each other; although I must say that those still-born quotations of our messmate Price are most tryingly annoying."

"And so is a pinch of snuff in the eye, I can assure you," replied Macallan.

"Granted; but we must 'give and take,' doctor."

"In the present case, I don't care how much you take, provided you don't give," rejoined Macallan, recovering his good-humour.

A messenger from Captain M——, who desired to speak with Macallan, put an end to the conversation.

"Mr. Macallan," said Captain M——, when the surgeon came into the cabin to receive his commands, "I am sorry to find, from letters which I have received, that the yellow fever is raging in the other islands in a most alarming manner, and that it has been communicated to the squadron on the station. I am sorry to add, that I have received a letter from the governor here, informing me that it has

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made its appearance at the barracks. I am afraid that we have little chance of escaping so general a visitation. As it is impossible to put to sea, even if my orders were not decisive to the contrary, are there not some precautions which ought to be taken?"

"Certainly, sir. It will be prudent to fumigate the lower deck; it has already been so well ventilated and whitewashed, that nothing else can be done; we must hope for the best."

"I do so," replied Captain M——; "but my hope is mingled with anxious apprehensions, which I cannot control. We must do all we can, and leave the rest to Providence."

The fears of Captain M—— were but too well grounded. For some days no symptoms of infection appeared on board of the *Aspasia*; but the ravages on shore, among the troops, were to such an extent, that the hospitals were filled, and those who were carried in might truly be said to have left hope behind. Rapid as was the mortality, it was still not rapid enough for the admittance of those who were attacked with the fatal disease; and as the bodies of fifteen or twenty were, each succeeding evening, borne unto the grave, the continual decrease of the military cortège which attended the last obsequies told the sad tale that those who, but a day or two before, had followed the corpses of others, were now carried on their own biers.

Other vessels on the station, which had put to sea from the different isles, with the disappointed expectation of avoiding the contagion, now came to an anchor in the bay, their crews so weakened by disease and death that they could with difficulty send up sufficient men to furl their sails. Boat after boat was sent on shore to the naval hospital, loaded with sufferers, until it became so crowded that no more could be received. Still the *Aspasia*, from the precautions which had been taken in fumigating and avoiding all unnecessary contact with the shipping and the shore, had for nearly a fortnight escaped the infection; but the miasma was at last wafted to the frigate, and in the course of one night fifteen men, who were in health the preceding evening, before eight o'clock on the following morning were lying in their hammocks under the half-

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deck. Before the close of that day the number of patients had increased to upwards of forty. The hospitals were so crowded that Captain M—— agreed with Macallan that it would be better that the men should remain on board.

The frigate was anchored with springs on her cable, so as always to be able to warp her stern to the breeze; the cabin bulkheads on the main-deck and the thwart-ship bulkheads below were removed, and the stern windows and ports thrown open to admit a freer circulation of air than could have been obtained by riding with her head to the sullen breeze, which hardly deigned to fan the scorching cheeks of the numerous and exhausted patients. The numbers on the list daily increased, until every part of the ship was occupied with their hammocks, and the surgeon and his assistants had scarcely time to relieve one by excessive bleeding, and consign him to his hammock, before another, staggering and fainting under the rapid disease, presented himself, with his arm bared, ready for the lancet. More blood was thrown into the stagnant water of the bay than would have sufficed to render ever verdant the laurels of many a well-fought action (for our laurels flourish not from the dew of heaven, but must be watered with a sanguine stream); and, alas! too soon more bodies were consigned to the deep than would have been demanded from the frigate in the warmest proof of courage and perseverance in her country's cause.

It is a scene like this which appals the sailor's heart. It is not the range of hammocks on the main-deck, tenanted by pale forms, with their bandages steeped in gore; for such is the chance of war, and the blood has flowed from hearts boiling with ardour and devotion. If not past cure, the smiles and congratulations of their shipmates alleviate the anguish and fever of the wound; if past all medical relief, still the passage from this transitory world is soothed by the affectionate sympathy of their messmates, by the promise to execute their last wishes, by the knowledge that it was in their country's defence they nobly fell. 'Tis not the chance of wreck, or of being consigned, unshrouded, to the dark wave, by the treacherous leak, or overwhelming fury of the storm. 'Tis not the "thought-executing fire." Every and all of these they are prepared and are resigned to meet, as ills to which their devious track is heir. But when disease,

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in its most loathsome form and implacable nature, makes its appearance—when we contemplate, in perspective, our own fate in the unfortunate who is selected, like the struggling sheep dragged from the hurdled crowd to be pierced by the knife of the butcher—when the horror of infection becomes so strong that we hold aloof from administering the kind offices of relief to our dearest friends; and, eventually prostrated ourselves, find the same regard for self pervades the rest, and that there is no voluntary attendance—then the sight of the expiring wretch, in his last effort, turning his head over the side of his hammock, and throwing off the dreadful black vomit, harbinger of his doom—'tis horrible! too horrible!

And the anxiety which we would in vain suppress—the reckless laugh of some, raised but to conceal their fear from human penetration—the intoxicating draught, poured down by others to dull the excited senses—the follies of years reviewed in one short minute—our life, how spent—how much to answer for!—a world how overvalued—a God how much neglected!—the feeling that we ought to pray, the inclination that propels us to do so, checked by the mistaken yet indomitable pride which puts the question to our manhood, “Will ye pray in fear, when ye neglected it in fancied security?” Down, stubborn knees! Pride is but folly towards men—insanity towards God!

But why dwell upon such a scene? Let it suffice to state that seventy of the *Aspasia's* men fell victims to the baneful climate, and that many more, who did recover, were left in such a state of exhaustion as to require their immediate return to their native shores. Except O'Keefe, the purser, all the officers whom I have introduced to the reader escaped. Three from the midshipmen's berth, who had served their time, and who for many months had been drinking the toast of “A bloody war and sickly season,” fell a sacrifice to their own thoughtless and selfish desire; and the clerk, who anticipated promotion when he heard that the purser was attacked, died before him.

When all was over, Jerry observed to Prose, “Well, Prose, ‘it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.’ We have had not one single thrashing during the sickness; but I suppose, now that their courage is returned, we must prepare for both principal and interest.”



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"Well now, Jerry, I do declare that's very likely, but I never thought of it before."

The large convoys of merchantmen that came out supplied the men that were required to man the disabled ships; and transports brought out cargoes from the depôts to fill up the skeleton ranks of the different companies. Among the various blessings left us in this life of suffering is forgetfulness of past evils; and the yellow fever was in a short time no longer the theme of dread, or even of conversation.

"Well, Tom, what sort of a place is this here West Hinges?" inquired a soldier who had been just landed from a transport, of an old acquaintance in the regiment whom he encountered.

"Capital place, Bill," returned the other to his interrogation; "plenty to drink, and always a-dry."

But as I do not wish to swell my narrative, and have no doubt but the reader will be glad to leave this pestilential climate, I shall inform him that for three years the *Aspasia* continued on the station, daily encountering the usual risks of battle, fire, and wreck; and that at the end of that period the health of Captain M—— was so much injured, by the climate and his own exertions, that he requested permission to quit the station.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

*Sir Bash.* This idol of my heart is—my own wife!

*Love.* Your own wife?

*Sir Bash.* Yes, my own wife. 'Tis all over with me: I am undone.

*The Way to Keep Him.*

SHOW us something new." Such was the cry of men at the time of the Prophet, and such it will continue until all prophecies are accomplished, all revelations confirmed. Man is constant in nought but inconsistency. He is directed to take pattern from the industrious bee, and lay up the sweet treasures which have been prepared for his use; but he prefers the giddy flight of the butterfly, pursuing his idle career from flower to flower, until, fatigued with the rapidity of his motions, he reposes for a time, and revolves in his

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mind where he shall bend his devious way in search of "something new."

This is the fatal propensity by which our first parents fell, and which, inherited by us, is the occasion of our follies and our crimes. "Were man but constant, he were perfect;" but that he cannot be. He is aware of the dangers, the hardships of travel—of the difference between offices performed by an interested and heartless world, and the sweet ministering of duty and affection. He feels that home, sweet home, is the heaven of such imperfect bliss as this world can bestow; yet wander he must, that he may appreciate its value; and although he hails it with rapture, soon after his return it palls upon him, and he quits it again in search of variety. Thus is man convinced of the beauty of Virtue, and acknowledges the peace that is to be found in her abode; yet propelled by the restless legacy of our first parents, he wanders into the entangled labyrinths of vice, until, satisfied that all is vexation, he retraces his steps in repentance and disgust. Thus he passes his existence in sinning, repenting, and sinning again, in search of "something new."

When Mr. Rainscourt was first separated from his wife, he felt himself released from a heavy burden, which had oppressed him for years; or as if fetters, which had been long riveted, had been knocked off; and he congratulated himself upon his regained liberty. Plunging at once into the depths of vice and dissipation, he sought pleasure after pleasure, variety upon variety—all that life could offer, or money purchase; and for a time thought himself happy. But there are drawbacks which cannot be surmounted, and he who wholly associates with the vicious must, more than any other, be exposed to the effects of depravity. He found man more than ever treacherous and ungrateful—woman more than ever deceiving—indulgence, cloying—debauchery, enervating—and his constitution and his spirits exhausted by excess. Satiated with everything, disgusted with everybody, he sought for "something new."

For more than two years he had not seen, and had hardly bestowed a thought upon, his wife and daughter, who still continued to reside at the mansion at ——. Not knowing what to do with himself, it occurred to him that the country

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air might recruit his health ; and he felt a degree of interest, if not for his wife, at least for his daughter. He determined, therefore, to pay them a visit. The horses were ordered, and to the astonishment of Mrs. Rainscourt, to whom he had given no intimation of his whim, and who looked upon a visit from her husband in her retirement as a visionary idea, Rainscourt made his appearance just as she was about to sit down to dinner, in company with the M<sup>c</sup>Elvinas and the vicar, who had become one of her most intimate associates.

If Rainscourt was pleased with the improvement of Emily, who was now more than fourteen years old, how much more was he astonished at the appearance of his wife, who, to his eyes, seemed even handsomer, if possible, than on the day when he had led her to the altar. For more than two years, content, if not perfect happiness, had been Mrs. Rainscourt's lot. She had recovered her health, her bloom, and her spirits, and not having had any source of irritation, her serenity of temper had been regained ; and Mrs. Rainscourt, to whose extreme beauty, from assuetude, he had before been blind, now appeared to him, after so long an absence, quite a different person from the one whom he had quitted with such indifference ; and as he surveyed her he seemed to feel that freshness of delight unknown to vitiated minds, except when successful in their search after "something new."

But Rainscourt was not altogether wrong in his idea that his wife was quite a different personage from the one which he had quitted. The vicar, who was acquainted with her situation, had not failed in his constant exertions for the improvement of mankind ; he had, by frequent conversation, and inculcation of our Christian duties, gradually softened her into a charitable and forgiving temper ; and now that she had no opportunity of exercising them, she had been made acquainted with the passive forbearance and humility constituting a part of the duties of a wife. She met her husband with kindness and respect ; while his daughter, who flew into his arms, proved that she had not been prepossessed against him, as he anticipated. Pleased with his reception, and with the company that he happened to meet, Rainscourt experienced sensations which had long been dormant ; and it occurred to him that an establishment with such an

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elegant woman as Mrs. Rainscourt at the head, and his daughter's beauty to grace it, would not only be more gratifying, but more reputable, than the course of life which he had lately pursued. He made himself excessively agreeable—was pleased with the benevolent demeanour of the vicar—thought Susan a lovely young woman, and M'Elvina a delightful companion; and when he retired to the chamber prepared for his reception, wondered that he had never thought of paying them a visit before.

It had been the intention of Rainscourt to have trespassed upon his wife's hospitality for one night only, and then have taken his departure for some fashionable watering-place; but there seemed to be such an appearance of renewed friendship between him and Mrs. Rainscourt, that an invitation was given by the vicar, for the whole party, on the ensuing day, to meet at the vicarage; and this was followed up by another from M'Elvina, for the day afterwards, at his cottage. This decided Mr. Rainscourt to remain there a day or two longer. But when the time of his departure arrived, Rainscourt was so pleased with his new acquaintance, so delighted with his daughter, and, to his astonishment, so charmed by his wife, that he could not tear himself away.

Women are proverbially sharp-sighted in all where the heart is concerned, and Mrs. Rainscourt soon perceived that the admiration of her husband was not feigned. Gratified to find that she had not yet lost her attractions, and either from a pardonable feeling of revenge at his desertion, or to prove to him that he was not aware of what he had rejected, she exerted all her powers to please; she was not only amiable, but fascinating; and after a sojourn of three weeks, which appeared but as many days, Rainscourt was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge to himself that he was violently enamoured of his discarded wife. He now felt that he should assume a higher station in society by being at the head of his own establishment, and that his consequence would be increased by the heiress of so large a property residing under his protection; and he thought that, if he could persuade Mrs. Rainscourt to live with him again, he could be happy, and exercise with pleasure the duties of a father and a husband. Neither the vicar nor M'Elvina were ignorant of his feelings; and the former, who recollected that those whom God has

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joined no man should put asunder, had made up his mind to bring the affair, if possible, to a happy issue ; and Rainscourt, who perceived the influence which the vicar possessed over his wife, determined to request that he would act as a mediator.

The vicar was delighted when Rainscourt called upon him one morning and unfolded his wishes. To reconcile those who had been at variance, to restore a husband to his wife, a father to a daughter, was the earnest desire of the good man's heart. He accepted the office with pleasure ; and in the course of the afternoon, while Rainscourt called upon the M'Elvinas, that he might be out of the way, proceeded upon his mission of peace and goodwill.

Mrs. Rainscourt, who was not surprised at the intelligence, listened to the vicar attentively, as he pointed out the necessity of forgiveness, if she hoped to be forgiven—of the conviction, in his own mind, that her husband was reformed—of the unpleasant remarks to which a woman who is separated from her husband must always be subjected—of the probability that the faults were not all on his side, and of the advantage her daughter would derive from their reunion : to which he entreated her to consent.

Mrs. Rainscourt was moved to tears. The conflict between her former love and her outraged feelings—the remembrance of his long neglect, opposed to his present assiduities—the stormy life she had passed in his company, and her repose of mind since their separation—weighed and balanced against each other so exactly that the scale would turn on neither side. She refused to give any decided answer, but requested a day or two for reflection ; and the vicar, who recollected the adage, that, in an affair of the heart, “the woman who deliberates is lost,” left her with a happy presage that his endeavours would be crowned with success. But Mrs. Rainscourt would not permit her own heart to decide. It was a case in which she did not consider that a woman was likely to be a correct judge ; and she had so long been on intimate terms with M'Elvina, that she resolved to lay the case before him, and be guided by his opinion.

The next day Mrs. Rainscourt went to the cottage alone, and having requested Susan to exclude all visitors, entered into a full detail of all the circumstances which had occurred previous to her separation from her husband, and the de-

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cision that she was now called upon to make, from his importunity.

Susan, who felt that she was unable to advise in a case of such importance to Mrs. Rainscourt's future happiness, immediately referred the matter to M<sup>rs</sup> Elvina.

His answer was decided. "I should be sorry, Mrs. Rainscourt, to give an opinion in opposition to that of the worthy vicar, did I not conceive that his slight knowledge of the world would, in this instance, tend to mislead both himself and you. Before Mr. Rainscourt had remained here a week, I prophesied, as Susan will corroborate, that this proposal would be made. Aware of his general character, and of the grounds of your separation, I took some pains to ingratiate myself, that I might ascertain his real sentiments; and with regret I express my conviction, that his prepossession in your favour, strong as it really is at present, will but prove transitory, and that possession would only subject you to future insults. He is *not* reformed; but satiated with other enjoyments, and fascinated with your attractions, his feelings towards you are those of renewed inclination, and not arising from conviction or remorse at his unprincipled career. You are happy at present—your refusal may, by stimulating his attentions, increase your happiness; but if you yield, it will only be a source of misery to you both. Such is my opinion. Do not let him know that I have influenced you, or it will interrupt an intimacy which I shall follow up, I trust, to your advantage; therefore, give no answer at present, nor while he remains here, for I perceive that he is a violent man when thwarted in his wishes. Demand a fortnight's consideration after he is gone, and then you will be able to decide from reflection, without being biassed against your own judgment, by his workings upon feelings which, to the honour of women, when the heart is concerned, spurn at the cold reasonings of prudence and worldly wisdom."

The advice of the man of the world prevailed over that of the man of God; and Rainscourt, after waiting in town with impatience for the answer, received a decided but kind refusal. He tore the letter into fragments with indignation, and set off for Cheltenham, more violently in love with his wife than he was before her rejection of him.



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### CHAPTER XXXVII

Great Negative! how vainly would the wise  
Inquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,  
Didst thou not stand to point their dull philosophies.

ROCHESTER'S *Ode to Nothing*.

SHOULD you feel half as tired with reading as I am with writing, I forgive you with all my heart if you throw down the book and read no more. I have written too fast—I have quite sprained my imagination—for you must know that this is all fiction, every word of it. Yet I do not doubt but there are many who will find out who the characters are meant for, notwithstanding my assertion to the contrary. Well, be it so. It's a very awkward position to have to write a chapter of sixteen pages, without materials for more than two; at least, I find it so. Some people have the power of spinning out a trifle of matter, covering a large surface with a grain of ore; like the goldbeater, who out of a single guinea will compose a score of books. I wish I could.

Is there nothing to give me an idea? I've racked my sensorium internally to no purpose. Let me look round the cabin for some external object to act as a fillip to an exhausted imagination. A little thing will do. Well, here's an ant. That's quite enough. *Commençons.*

"Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits," they say; but much as travel by land may enlarge the mind, it never can be expanded to the utmost of its capabilities until it has also peregrinated by water. I believe that not only the human intellect, but the instinct of brutes, is enlarged by going to sea.

The ant which attracted my attention is one of a nest in my cabin, whose labours I often superintend; and I defy any ant in any part of the four continents, or wherever land may be, to show an equal knowledge of mechanical power. I do not mean to assert that there is originally a disproportion of intellect between one animal and another of the same species; but I consider that the instinct of animals

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is capable of expansion, as well as the reason of man. The ants on shore would, if it were required, be equally assisted by their instinct, I believe; but not being required, it is not brought into play, and therefore, as I before observed, they have not the resources of which my little colony at present are in possession.

Now I will kill a cockroach for them; there is no difficulty in finding one, unfortunately for me, for they know everything that I have. There never was a class of animals so indifferent to their fare, whether it be paper, or snuff, or soap, or cloth. Like Time, they devour everything. The scoundrels have nearly demolished two dozen antibilious pills. I hope they will remember Dr. Vance as long as they live.

Well, here's one—a fine one. I throw his crushed carcass on the deck, and observe the ants have made their nest in the beams over my head, from which I infer that the said beams are not quite so sound as they should be. An ant has passed by the carcass, and is off on a gallop to give notice. He meets two or three, stops a second, and passes on. Now the tide flows; it's not above a minute since I threw the cockroach down, and now it is surrounded by hundreds. What a bustle! what running to and fro! They must be giving orders. See, there are fifty at least, who lay hold of each separate leg of the monster, who in bulk is equal to eight thousand of them. The body moves along with rapidity, and they have gained the side of the cabin. Now for the ascent. See how those who hold the lower legs have quitted them, and pass over to assist the others at the upper. As there is not room for all to lay hold of the creature's legs, those who cannot, fix their forceps round the bodies of the others, double-banking them, as we call it. Away they go, up the side of the ship—a steady pull, and all together. But now the work becomes more perilous, for they have to convey the body to their nest over my head, which is three feet from the side of the ship. How can they possibly carry that immense weight, walking with their heads downwards, and clinging with their feet to the beams? Observe how carefully they turn the corner—what bustle and confusion in making their arrangements! Now they start. They have brought the body head-and-stern with the ship, so that all the legs are exactly opposed to each other in the direction

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in which they wish to proceed. One of the legs on the fore-side is advanced to its full stretch, while all the others remain stationary. That leg stops, and the ants attached to it hold on with the rest, while another of the foremost legs is advanced. Thus they continue until all the foremost are out, and the body of the animal is suspended by its legs at its full stretch. Now one of the hindmost legs closes in to the body, while all the others hold on—now another, and another, each in their turn; and by this skilful manœuvre they have contrived to advance the body nearly an inch along the ceiling. One of the foremost legs advances again, and they proceed as before. Could your shore-going ants have managed this? I have often watched them when a boy, because my grandmother used to make me do so; in later days, because I delighted in their industry and perseverance; but alas! in neither case did I profit by their example.

“Now, Freddy,” the old lady would say, giving her spectacles a preparatory wipe, as she basked in a summer evening’s sun after a five o’clock tea, “fetch a piece of bread and butter, and we will see the ants work. Lord bless the boy, if he hasn’t thrown down a whole slice. Why do you waste good victuals in that way? Who do you think’s to eat it after it has been on the gravel? There, pinch a bit off and throw it down. Put the rest back upon the plate—it will do for the cat.”

But these ants were no more to be compared to mine than a common labourer is to the engineer who directs the mechanical powers which raise mountains from their foundation. My old grandmother would never let me escape until the bread and butter was in the hole, and what was worse, I had then to listen to the moral inference which was drawn, and which took up more time than the ants did to draw the bread and butter—all about industry, and what not—a long story, partly her own, partly borrowed from Solomon; but it was labour in vain. I could not understand why, because ants like bread and butter, I must like my book. She was an excellent old woman; but nevertheless, many a time did I have a fellow-feeling with the boy in the caricature print, who is sitting with his old grandmother and the cat, and says, “I wish one of us three were dead. It an’t I—and it an’t you, pussy.”

Well, she died at last, full of years and honour; and I was

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summoned from school to attend her funeral. My uncle was much affected, for she had been an excellent mother. She might have been so ; but I, graceless boy, could not perceive her merits as a grandmother, and showed a great deal of fortitude upon the occasion. I recollect a circumstance attendant upon her funeral which, connected as it was with a subsequent one, has since been the occasion of serious reflection upon the trifling causes which will affect the human mind when prostrate under affliction. My grandmother's remains were consigned to an old family vault not far from the river. When the last ceremonies had been paid, and the coffin was being lowered into the deep receptacle of generations which had passed away, I looked down, and it was full of water, nearly up to the arch of the vault. Observing my surprise, and perceiving the cause, my uncle was much annoyed at the circumstance ; but it was too late—the cords had been removed, and my grandmother had sunk to the bottom. My uncle interrogated the sexton after the funeral service was over.

“ Why, sir, it's because it's high-water now in the river ; she will be all dry before the evening.”

This made the matter worse. If she was all a-dry in the evening, she would be all afloat again in the morning. It was no longer a place of rest, and my uncle's grief was much increased by the idea. For a long while afterwards he appeared uncommonly thoughtful at spring tides.

But although his grief yielded to time, the impression was not to be effaced. Many years afterwards a fair cousin was summoned from the world before she had time to enter upon the duties imposed upon the sex, or be convinced, from painful experience, that to die is gain. It was then I perceived that my uncle had contracted a sort of post-mortem hydrophobia. He fixed upon a church, on the top of a hill, and ordered a vault to be dug, at a great expense, out of the solid chalk, under the chancel of the church. There it would not only be dry below, but even defended from the rain above. It was finished, and (the last moisture to which she was ever to be subjected) the tears of affection were shed over her remains by those who lost and loved her. When the ceremony was over, my uncle appeared to look down into the vault with a degree of satisfaction. “ There,” said he, “ she

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will lie as dry as possible till the end of time." And I really believe that this conviction on his part went further to console him than even the aid of religion or the ministering of affection. He often commented upon it, and as often as he did so, I thought of my old grandmother and the spring tides.

I had an odd dream the other night about my own burial and subsequent state, which was so diametrically opposite to my uncle's ideas of comfort, that I will relate it here.

I was dead ; but either from politeness or affection, I knew not which, the spirit still lingered with the body, and had not yet taken its flight, although the tie between them had been dissolved. I had been killed in action ; and the first lieutenant of the ship, with mingled feelings of sorrow and delight—sorrow at my death, which was a tribute that I did not expect from him, and delight at his assumed promotion, for the combat had been brought to a successful issue—read the funeral service which consigned me and some twenty others, sewed up in hammocks, to the deep, into which we descended with one simultaneous rush.

I thought that we soon parted company from each other, and, all alone, I continued to sink, sink, sink, until at last I could sink no deeper. I was suspended, as it were : I had taken my exact position in the scale of gravity, and I lay floating upon the condensed and buoyant fluid, many hundred fathoms below the surface. I thought to myself, " Here, then, am I to lie in pickle until I am awakened." It was quite dark, but by the spirit I saw as plain as if it were noonday ; and I perceived objects in the water, which gradually increased in size. They were sharks in search of prey. They attacked me furiously ; and as they endeavoured to drag me out of my canvas cerements, I whirled round and round as their flat noses struck against my sides. At last they succeeded. In a moment I was dismembered without the least pain, for pain had been left behind me in the world from which I had been released. One separated a leg with his sharp teeth, and darted away north ; another an arm, and steered south ; each took his portion, and appeared to steer away in a different direction, as if he did not wish to be interrupted in his digestion.

" Help yourselves, gentlemen, help yourselves," mentally exclaimed I ; " but if Mr. Young is correct in his ' Night

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Thoughts,' where am I to fumble for my bones when they are to be forthcoming?" Nothing was left but my head, and that, from superior gravity, continued to sink, gyrating in its descent, so as to make me feel quite giddy; but it had not gone far before one, who had not received his portion, darted down upon it perpendicularly, and as the last fragment of me rolled down his enormous gullet, the spirit fled, and all was darkness and oblivion.

But I have digressed sadly from the concatenation of ideas. The ant made me think of my grandmother, my grandmother of my uncle, my uncle of my cousin, and her death of my dream, for "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little lives are rounded with a sleep." But I had not finished all I had to say relative to the inferior animals. When on board of a man-of-war, not only is their instinct expanded, but they almost change their nature from their immediate contact with human beings, and become tame in an incredibly short space of time. Man had dominion given unto him over the beasts of the field; the fiercest of the feline race will not attack, but avoid him, unless goaded on by the most imperious demands of hunger; and it is a well-known fact, that there is a power in the eye of man to which all other animals quail. What, then, must it be to an animal who is brought on board, and is in immediate collision with hundreds, whose fearless eyes meet his in every direction in which he turns, and whose behaviour towards him corresponds with their undaunted looks? The animal is subdued at once. I remember a leopard which was permitted to run loose after he had been three days on board, although it was thought necessary to bring him in an iron cage. He had not been in the ship more than a fortnight, when I observed the captain of the after-guard rubbing the nose of the animal against the deck for some offence which he had committed.

"Why, you have pretty well brought that gentleman to his bearings," observed I; "he's as tame as a puppy."

"Tame! why, sir, he knows better than to be otherwise. I wish the Hemp'rer of Maroccy would send us on board a cock rhinoceros—we'd tame him in a week."

And I believe the man was correct in his assertion.

The most remarkable change of habit that I ever witnessed was in a wether sheep, on board of a frigate, during the last



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war. He was one of a stock which the captain had taken on board for a long cruise, and being the only survivor, during the time that the ship was refitting he had been allowed to run about the decks, and had become such a favourite with the ship's company, that the idea of his being killed, even when short of fresh provisions, never even entered into the head of the captain. Jack, for such was his cognomen, lived entirely with the men, being fed with biscuit from the different messes. He knew the meaning of the different pipes of the boatswain's mates, and always went below when they piped to breakfast, dinner, or supper. But amongst other peculiarities, he would chew tobacco and drink grog. Is it to be wondered, therefore, that he was a favourite with the sailors? That he at first did this from obedience is possible; but, eventually, he was as fond of grog as any of the men; and when the pipe gave notice of serving it out, he would run aft to the tub, and wait his turn—for an extra half-pint of water was, by general consent, thrown into the tub when the grog was mixed, that Jack might have his regular allowance. From habit, the animal knew exactly when his turn came. There were eighteen messes in the ship; and as they were called, by the purser's steward or sergeant of marines, in rotation—first mess, second mess, &c.—after the last mess was called Jack presented himself at the tub and received his allowance.

Now, it sometimes occurred that a mess, when called, would miss its turn, by the man deputed to receive the liquor not being present; upon which occasion the other messes were served in rotation, and the one who had not appeared to the call was obliged to wait till after all the rest; but a circumstance of this kind always created a great deal of mirth; for the sheep, who knew that it was his turn after the eighteenth, or last mess, would butt away any one who attempted to interfere; and if the party persevered in being served before Jack, he would become quite outrageous, flying at the offender, and butting him forward into the galley, and sometimes down the hatchway, before his anger could be appeased—from which it would appear that the animal was passionately fond of spirits. This I consider as great a change in the nature of a ruminating animal as can well be imagined.

I could mention many instances of this kind, but I shall reserve them till I have grown older; then I will be as garrulous

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as Montaigne. As it is, I think I hear the reader say, "All this may be very true, but what has it to do with the novel?" Nothing, I grant; but it has a great deal to do with making a book, for I have completed a whole chapter out of nothing.

### CHAPTER XXXVIII

———And with a flowing sail  
Went a-bounding for the island of the free,  
Towards which the impatient wind blew half a gale;  
High dashed the spray, the bows dipped in the sea.

BYRON.

AFTER a run of six weeks the *Aspasia* entered the Channel. The weather, which had been clear during the passage home, now altered its appearance; and a dark sky, thick fog, and mizzling, cold rain intimated their approach to the English shore. But relaxed as they had been by three years' endurance of a tropical sun, it was nevertheless a source of congratulation, rather than complaint; for it was "regular November Channel weather," and was associated with their propinquity to those homes and firesides, which would be enhanced in value from the ordeal to be passed before they could be enjoyed.

"Hah!" exclaimed an old quartermaster, who had served the earlier part of his life in a coaster, as he buttoned his pea-jacket up to the throat; "this is what I calls something like; none of your d—d blue skies here."

Such is the power of affection, whether of person or of things, that even faults become a source of endearment.

As the short day closed, the *Aspasia*, who was running before the wind and slanting rain, which seemed to assist her speed with its gravity, hove to, and tried for soundings.

"Well, Stewart, what's the news?" said one of the midshipmen, as he entered the berth; the drops of rain, which hung upon the rough exterior of his greatcoat, glittering like small diamonds, from the reflection of the solitary candle, which made darkness but just visible.

"News," replied Stewart, taking off his hat with a jerk, so

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as to besprinkle the face of Prose with the water that had accumulated on the top of it, and laughing at his sudden start from the unexpected shower; "why, as the fellows roar out with the second edition of an evening paper, 'Great news, glorious news!'—and all comprised in a short sentence: Soundings in seventy-four fathoms; grey sand and shells."

"Huzza!" answered the old master's mate.

"Now for three cheers, and then for the song."

The three cheers having been given with due emphasis, if not discretion, they all stood up round the table. "Now, my boys, keep time. Mr. Prose, if you attempt to chime in with your confounded nasal twang, I'll give you a squeeze."

"For England, when, with favouring gale,  
Our gallant ship up channel steered,  
And, scudding under easy sail,  
The high blue western land appeared,  
To heave the lead the seaman sprung,  
And to the watchful pilot sung,  
By the deep *nine*."

The song, roared out in grand chorus by the midshipmen, was caught up, after the first verse, by the marines in their berth, close to them; and from them passed along the lower deck as it continued, so that the last stanzas were sung by nearly two hundred voices, sending forth a volume of sound that penetrated into every recess of the vessel, and entered into the responsive bosoms of all on board, not excepting the captain himself, who smiled, as he bent over the break of the gangway, at what he would have considered a breach of subordination in the ship's company, had not he felt that it arose from that warm attachment to their country which had created our naval pre-eminence.

The song ended with tumultuous cheering fore and aft, and not until then did the captain send down to request that the noise might be discontinued. As soon as it was over, the grog was loudly called for in the midshipmen's berth, and made its appearance.

"Here's to the white cliffs of England," cried one, drinking off his tumbler, and turning it upside down on the table.

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"Here's to the Land of Beauty."

"Here's to the Emerald Isle."

"And here's to the Land of Cakes," cried Stewart, drinking off his tumbler, and throwing it over his shoulder.

"Six for one for skylarking," cried Prose.

"A hundred for one, you d—d cockney, for all I care."

"No—no—no," cried all the berth; "not one for one."

"You shall have a song for it, my boys," cried Stewart, who immediately commenced, with great taste and execution, the beautiful air—

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And the days o' auld lang syne?"

"Well, I've not had my toast yet," said Jerry, when the applause at the end of the song had discontinued: "Here's to the shady side of Pall Mall."

"And I suppose," said Stewart, giving Prose a slap on the back, which took his breath away, "that you are thinking of Wapping, blow you."

"I think I have had enough of whopping since I've been in this ship," answered Prose.

"Why, Prose, you're quite brilliant, I do declare," observed Jerry. "Like a flint, you only require a blow from Stewart's iron fist to emit sparks. Try him again, Stewart. He's like one of the dancing dervishes in the 'Arabian Nights': you must thrash him to get a few farthings of wit out of him."

"I do wish that you would keep your advice to yourself, Jerry."

"My dear Prose, it's all for the honour of Middlesex that I wish you to shine. I'm convinced that there's a great deal of wit in that head of yours, but it's confined, like the kernel in a nut: there's no obtaining it without breaking the shell. Try him again, Stewart."

"Come, Prose, I'll take your part, and try his own receipt upon himself. I'll thrash him till he says something witty."

"I do like that amazingly," replied Jerry. "Why, if I do say a good thing, you'll never find out. I shall be thrashed to all eternity. Besides, I'm at too great a distance from you."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, I'm like some cows; I don't give down my milk

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without the calf is alongside of me. Now, if you were on this side of the table——”

“Which I am,” replied Stewart, as he sprang over it, and seizing Jerry by the neck. “Now, Mr. Jerry, say a good thing directly.”

“Well, promise me to understand it. We are just in the reverse situation of England and Scotland after the battle of Culloden.”

“What do you mean by that, you wretch?” cried Stewart, whose wrath was kindled by the reference.

“Why, I’m in your clutches, just like Scotland was—a conquered country.”

“You lie, you little blackguard,” cried Stewart, pinching Jerry’s neck till he forced his mouth open; “Scotland was never conquered.”

“Well, then,” continued Jerry, whose bile was up, as soon as Stewart relaxed his hold, “I’m like King Charles in the hands of the Scotch. How much was it that you sold him for?”

Jerry’s shrivelled carcass sounded like a drum from the blow which he received for this second insult to Stewart’s idolised native land. As soon as he could recover his speech, “Well, haven’t I been very witty? Are you content, or will you have some more? or will you try Prose, and see whether you can draw blood out of a turnip?”

Stewart, who seemed disinclined to have any more elegant extracts from Jerry, resumed his former seat by Prose, who appeared to be in deep reflection.

“Well, Prose, are you thinking of your friends in Cheapside?”

“And suppose I am, Stewart? We have the same feelings in the city that you have in the heather; and although I do not, like you, pretend to be allied to former kings, yet one may love one’s father and mother, brothers and sisters, without being able to trace back to one’s great-great-grandfather. I never disputed your high pretensions; why, then, interfere with my humble claims to the common feelings of humanity?”

“I am rebuked, Prose,” replied Stewart; “you shall have my glass of grog for that speech, for you never made a better. Give me your hand, my good fellow.”

“I am glad that you, at last, show some symptoms of

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reason," observed the still indignant Jerry, standing close to the door. "I have some hopes of your Majesty yet, after such an extraordinary concession on your part. You must have great reason to be proud that you are able to trace your pedigree up to a border chieftain, who sallied forth on the foray when the spurs were dished up for his dinner; or, in plain words, went a cattle-stealing, and robbing those who could not resist. It might then be considered a mark of prowess; but times are altered now; and if your celebrated ancestor lived in the present time, why" (continued Jerry, pointing his finger under his left ear), "he would receive what he well deserved, that's all."

"By Him that made me, get out of my reach, if you do not wish me to murder you!" cried Stewart, pale with rage.

"I took care of that," replied Jerry, "before I ventured to give my opinion; and now that I'm ready for a start, I'll give you a piece of advice. Trace your ancestors as far back as you can, as long as they have continued to be honest men—if you don't stop there you are a fool"—and Jerry very prudently made his escape at the conclusion of his sentence.

"The hour of retribution will come," cried Stewart after Jerry, as the latter sprang up the ladder; but it did not, for when they met next morning it was to feast their eyes upon the chalky cliffs of the Isle of Wight, as the *Aspasia* steered for the Needles. There are two events on board of a man-of-war, after which injuries are forgotten, apologies are offered and received, intended duels are suppressed, hands are exchanged in friendship, and goodwill drives away long-cherished animosity. One is, after an action; another, upon the sight of native land after a protracted absence.

Jerry fearlessly ranged up alongside of Stewart as he looked over the gangway.

"We shall be at anchor by twelve o'clock."

"You may bless your stars for it," replied Stewart with a significant smile.

The *Aspasia* now ran through the Needles, and having successively passed by Hurst Castle, Cowes, and the entrance to Southampton Water, brought up at Spithead in seven fathoms. The sails were furled, the ship was moored, the boat was manned, and Captain M—— went on shore to report himself to the port admiral, and deliver his despatches.



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When the boat returned, it brought off letters which had been waiting the arrival of the ship. One informed Jerry of the death of his father, and of his being in possession of a fortune which enabled him to retire from the service. Another, from the Admiralty, announced the promotion of Stewart to the rank of lieutenant; and one from M'Elvina to our hero, inviting him to take up his quarters at his house as long as the service would permit, stating that Captain M—— had been written to, to request that he might be allowed leave of absence.

As soon as Captain M—— had received an answer from the Admiralty, he returned on board, and acquainted his officers that he had obtained leave to remain on shore for some time for the re-establishment of his health, and that another captain would be appointed to the ship. He turned the hands up, and addressed the ship's company, thanking them for their good behaviour while under his command, and expressing his hopes that upon his reappointment he should find them all alive and well. The first lieutenant, to his great surprise and delight, was presented with his rank as commander, which Captain M—— had solicited from the Admiralty. The men were dismissed, and Captain M——, bidding farewell to his officers, descended the side and shoved off. As soon as the boat was clear of the frigate, the men, without orders, ran up, and manning the shrouds, saluted him with three farewell cheers. Captain M—— took off his hat to the compliment, and muffling up his face with his boat-cloak to conceal his emotion, the boat pulled for the shore.

Seymour, who was in the boat, followed his captain to the inn, who informed him that he had obtained his discharge into a guardship, that his time might go on, and leave of absence for two months, which he might spend with his friend M'Elvina. Captain M—— then dismissed him with a friendly shake of the hand, desiring him to write frequently, and to draw upon his agent if he required any pecuniary assistance.

Seymour's heart was full, and he could not answer his kind protector. He returned on board, and bidding farewell to his messmates, the next evening he had arrived at the cottage of M'Elvina. That his reception was cordial, it is hardly necessary to state. M'Elvina, whose marriage had not been blessed with a family, felt towards our hero as if he was his own child;

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and Susan was delighted with the handsome exterior and winning manners of the lad, whose boyish days had often been the theme of her husband's conversation.

If the reader will take the trouble to reckon with his fingers, he will find that William Seymour is now sixteen years old. If he will not, he must take my word for it; and it may also be as well to inform him that Miss Rainscourt is more than fourteen. I am the more particular in mentioning these chronological facts, because in the next chapter I intend to introduce the parties to each other.

### CHAPTER XXXIX

A strong bull stands, threat'ning furious war;  
He flourishes his horns, looks sourly round,  
And, hoarsely bellowing, traverses his ground.

BLACKMORE.

IT was on the second day after the arrival of Seymour that Emily, who was not aware of the addition to the party at the cottage, proceeded on foot through the park and field adjacent to pay Susan a visit. She was attended by a man-servant in livery, who carried some books, which Mrs. M'Elvina had expressed a desire to read. When Emily had arrived at the last field, which was rented by a farmer hard by, she was surprised to perceive that it was occupied by an unpleasant tenant, to wit, a large bull; who on their approach commenced pawing the ground, and showing every symptom of hostility. She quickened her pace, and as the animal approached, found that she had gained much nearer to the stile before her than to the one which she had just passed over, and frightened as she was, she determined to proceed. The servant who accompanied her manifested more fear than she did. As the bull approached, Emily, who had heard what precautions should be taken in a similar exigence, turned her face towards the animal, and walked backwards to the stile. The domestic seemed determined to preserve the exact station which his duty and respect required, and kept himself behind his young mistress. As, however, the bull advanced, and seemed inclined

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to charge upon them, his fears would not permit him to remain in that situation, and throwing down the books, he took to his heels, and ran for a gap in the hedge. By this manœuvre, Emily was left to make any arrangements she pleased with the infuriated animal.

But the bull had no quarrel with a lady, dressed in a white muslin frock ; he had taken offence at the red plush inexpressibles, which were a part of the family livery, and immediately ran at the servant, passing Emily without notice. The terrified man threw himself in an agony of fright into the gap, but was so paralysed with fear that he had no strength to force his passage through. With his head and shoulders on the other side of the hedge, there he stuck on his hands and knees, offering a fair target to the bull, who flew at it with such violence that he forced him several yards into the opposite field. Senseless and exhausted, he lay there more from fear than injury, while the roaring bull paced up and down the hedge, with his tail in the air, attempting in vain to force a passage in pursuit of the object of his detestation.

The mind of woman is often more powerful than her frame, and the one will bear up against circumstances in which the other will succumb. Thus it was with Emily, who reached the stile, clambered over it with difficulty, and attaining the house of M'Elvina, which was but a few yards distant, felt that her powers failed her as soon as exertion was no longer required. With difficulty she perceived with her swimming eyes that there was a gentleman in the parlour ; and faintly exclaiming, "O Mr. M'Elvina !" fell senseless into the arms of William Seymour.

Mr. and Mrs. M'Elvina were not at home ; they had walked to the vicarage ; and Seymour, who was very busy finishing a sketch of the *Aspasia* for his hostess, had declined accompanying them in their visit. His surprise at finding a young lady in his arms may easily be imagined ; but great as was his surprise, his distress was greater, from the extreme novelty of the situation. It was not that he was unaccustomed to female society : on the contrary, his captain had introduced him everywhere in the different ports of the colonies in which they had anchored ; and perhaps there is no better society, although limited, than is to be met with at the table of a colonial governor. But here it was quite different. He had been

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habituated to follow in the wake, as the lady governess made sail for the dining-room, the whole fleet forming two lines abreast in close order, and then coming to an anchor, in beautiful precision, to attack the dinner, which surrendered at discretion. He had been habituited to the ball-room, where the ladies glided over the chalked floor, like so many beautiful yachts plying in Southampton Water on a fine day ; he had tried his rate of sailing down the middle of a country dance with some fair partner, and tacked and wore as required to the mazes of poussette and right and left. This was all plain sailing ; but the case was now quite different. Here was a strange sail, who had not even shown her number, taken aback in stays, and on her beam-ends in a squall.

Seymour knew nothing about fainting. Sometimes a man had fits on board a ship (although invariably discharged when it was known) ; but the only remedy in a man-of-war, in such cases, was to lay the patient down between the guns, and let him come-to at his own leisure. It was impossible to act so in this case ; and Seymour, as he bent over the beautiful pale countenance of Emily, felt that he never could be tired of holding her in his arms. However, as it was necessary that something should be done, he laid her down on the sofa, and seizing the bell-rope, pulled it violently for assistance. The wire had been previously slackened, and the force which Seymour used brought down the rope without ringing the bell. There was but one in the room ; and not choosing to leave Emily, he was again compelled to rely on his own resources. What was good for her ? Water ? There was none in the room, except what he had been painting with, and that was desperately discoloured with the Indian ink. Nevertheless, he snatched up his large brush which he used for washing-in his skies, and commenced painting her face and temples with the discoloured water, but without producing the desired effect of reanimation.

What next ? Oh, salts and burnt feathers ; he had read of them in a novel. Salts he had none, burnt feathers were to be procured. There were two live birds, called cardinals, belonging to Mrs. M'Elvina, in a cage near the window, and there was also a stuffed green parrot in a glass case. Seymour showed his usual presence of mind in his decision. The tails of the live birds would in all probability grow again, that of the stuffed parrot never could. He put his hand into the cage,

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and seizing the fluttering proprietors, pulled out both their long tails, and having secured the door of the cage, thrust the ends of the feathers into the fire, and applied them, frizzling and spluttering, to the nostrils of Emily. But they were replaced in the fire again and again, until they would emit no more smoke, and Emily still continued in a state of insensibility. There was no help for it—the parrot, which he knew Mrs. M'Elvina was partial to, must be sacrificed. A blow with the poker demolished the glass, and the animal was wrenched off its perch, and the tail inserted between the bars of the grate. But burnt feathers were of no use; and Seymour, when he had burnt down the parrot's tail to the stump, laid it upon the table in despair.

He now began to be seriously alarmed, and the beauty of the object heightened his pity and commiseration. His anxiety increased to that degree that, losing his presence of mind, and giving way to his feelings, he apostrophised the inanimate form, and hanging over it with the tenderness of a mother over her lifeless child, as a last resource kissed its lips again and again with almost frantic anxiety. At the time of his most eager application of this last remedy, M'Elvina and Susan entered the room, without his being aware of their approach.

The parrot on the table, with his tail still burning like a slow match, first caught their eyes; and as they advanced further in, there was Seymour, to their astonishment, kissing a young lady to whom he had never been introduced, and who appeared to be quite passive to his endearments.

"Seymour!" cried M'Elvina, "what is all this?"

"I'm glad you've come; I cannot bring her to. I've tried everything."

"So it appears. Why, you've smothered her—she's black in the face," replied M'Elvina, observing the marks of the Indian ink upon Emily's cheek.

Susan, who immediately perceived the condition of Emily, applied her salts, and desired M'Elvina to call the women. In a few minutes, whether it was that the remedies were more effectual, or Nature had resumed her powers, Emily opened her eyes, and was carried upstairs into Mrs. M'Elvina's room.

We must return to the servant, who, with no other injury

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than a severe contusion of the os coccygis, from the frontal bone of the bull, recovered his senses and his legs at the same moment, and never ceased exerting the latter until he arrived at —— Hall, where he stated, what indeed he really believed to be the case, that Miss Emily had been gored to death by the bull; asserting at the same time, what was equally incorrect, that he had nearly been killed himself in attempting her rescue. The tidings were communicated to Mrs. Rainscourt, who, frantic at the intelligence, without bonnet or shawl, flew down the park towards the fields, followed by all the servants of the establishment, armed with guns, pitchforks, and any other weapons that they could obtain at the moment of hurry and trepidation. They arrived at the field; the bull was there, waiting for them at the stile, for he had observed them at a distance, and as he was now opposed to half-a-dozen pair of inexpressibles, instead of one, his wrath was proportionally increased. He pawed the ground, bellowed, and made divers attempts to leap the stile, which, had he effected, it is probable that more serious mischief would have occurred. The whole party stood aghast; while Mrs. Rainscourt screamed, and called for her child—her child; and attempted to recover her liberty from the arms of those who held her, and rush into the field to her own destruction.

The farmer to whom the animal belonged had heard his bellowing on the first assault, and had come out to ascertain the cause. He was just in time to behold the footman pushed through the hedge, and to witness the escape of Emily into the house of M'Elvina. Intending to remove the animal, he returned to his dinner, when his resumed bellowing summoned him again, and perceiving the cause, he joined the party, and addressing Mrs. Rainscourt, "The young lady is all safe, ma'am, in the gentleman's house yonder. The brute's quiet enough; it's all along of them red breeches that angers him. A bull can't abide 'em, ma'am."

"Safe, do you say? Thank God. Oh, take me to her."

"This way, ma'am, then," said the farmer, leading her round the hedge to the cottage of M'Elvina by a more circuitous way.

Susan had just called up M'Elvina, and Seymour was again left to himself in the parlour, when Mrs. Rainscourt, bursting



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from those who conducted her, tottered in, and sank exhausted on the sofa. Seymour, to whom the whole affair was a mystery, and who had been ruminating upon it, and upon the sweet lips which he had pressed, in utter astonishment cried out, "What! another?" Not choosing, in this instance, to trust to his own resources, he contented himself with again shoving the parrot's tail between the bars, and as he held it to his patient's nose, loudly called out for M'Elvina, who, summoned by his appeals, with many others entered the room, and relieved him of his charge, who soon recovered, and joined her daughter in the room upstairs.

The carriage had been sent for to convey Mrs. Rainscourt and her daughter home. When they came down into the parlour, previous to their departure, Seymour was formally introduced, and received the thanks of Mrs. Rainscourt for the attention which he had paid to her daughter, and a general invitation to the Hall.

Emily, to whom Susan had communicated the panacea to which Seymour had ultimately resorted, blushed deeply as she smiled her adieux; and our hero, as the carriage whirled away, felt a sensation as new to him as that of Cymon when ignited by the rays of beauty which flashed from the sleeping Iphigenia.

## CHAPTER XL

Idiots only will be cozened twice.

DRYDEN.

SEYMOUR did not fail to profit by the invitation extended by Mrs. Rainscourt, and soon became the inseparable companion of Emily. His attentions to her were a source of amusement to the M'Elvinas and her mother, who thought little of a flirtation between a midshipman of sixteen and a girl that was two years his junior. The two months' leave of absence having expired, Seymour was obliged to return to the guardship, on the books of which his name had been enrolled. It was with a heavy heart that he bade farewell to the M'Elvinas. He had kissed away the tears of separation from the cheeks of Emily, and their young love, unalloyed

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as that between a brother and sister, created an uneasy sensation in either heart which absence could not remove.

When our hero reported himself to the commanding officer of the guardship, he was astonished at his expressing a total ignorance of his belonging to her, and sent down for the clerk to know if his name was on the books.

The clerk, a spare, middle-sized personage, remarkably spruce and neat in his attire, and apparently about forty years of age, made his appearance with the open list under his arm, and with a humble bow to the first lieutenant, laid it upon the capstan-head, and running over several pages from the top to the bottom with his finger, at last discovered our hero's name.

"It's all right, young gentleman," said the first lieutenant. "Take him down to the berth, Mr. Skrimmage, and introduce him. You've brought your hammock, of course, and it is to be hoped that your chest has a good lock upon it; if not, I can tell you you'll not find all your clothes tally with your division list by to-morrow morning. But we cannot help these things here. We are but a sort of a 'thoroughfare,' and every man must take care of himself."

Seymour thanked the first lieutenant for his caution, and descended with the clerk, who requested him to step into his private cabin previous to being ushered into the gun-room, where the midshipmen's mess was held, and of which Mr. Skrimmage filled the important post of caterer. "Mrs. Skrimmage, my dear," said Seymour's conductor, "allow me to introduce to you Mr. Seymour." The lady courtesied with great affectation and an air of condescension, and requested our hero to take a chair; soon after which Mr. Skrimmage commenced, "It is the custom, my dear sir, in this ship, for every gentleman who joins the midshipmen's berth to put down one guinea as entrance money, after which the subscription is restricted to the sum of five shillings per week, which is always paid in advance. You will therefore oblige me by the trifling sum of six-and-twenty shillings previous to my introducing you to your new messmates. You will excuse my requesting the money to be paid now, which, I assure you, does not arise from any doubt of your honour; but the fact is, being the only member of the mess who can be considered as stationary, the unpleasant duty of caterer

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has devolved upon me, and I have lost so much money by young gentlemen leaving the ship in a hurry, and forgetting to settle their accounts, that it has now become a rule, which is never broken through."

As soon as Mr. Skrimmage had finished his oration, which he delivered in the softest and most persuasive manner, Seymour laid down the sum required, and having waited, at the clerk's request, to see his name, and sum paid, entered in the mess-book by Mrs. Skrimmage, he was shown into the gun-room, which he found crowded with between thirty and forty midshipmen, whose vociferations and laughter created such a din as to drown the voice of his conductor, who cried out, "Mr. Seymour, gentlemen, to join the mess," and then quitted the noisy abode, which gave our hero the idea of Bedlam broke loose.

On one side of the gun-room a party of fifteen or twenty were seated cross-legged on the deck in a circle, stripped to their shirts, with their handkerchiefs laid up like ropes in their hands. A greatcoat and a sleeve-board, which they had borrowed from the marine tailor, who was working on the main-deck, lay in the centre, and they pretended to be at work with their needles on the coat. It was the game of goose, the whole amusement of which consisted in giving and receiving blows. Every person in the circle had a name to which he was obliged to answer immediately when it was called, in default of which he was severely punished by all the rest. The names were distinguished by colours, as Black Cap, Red Cap; and the elegant conversation, commenced by the master tailor, ran as follows; observing that it was carried on with the greatest rapidity of utterance:—

"That's a false stitch—whose was it?"

"Black Cap."

"No, sir, not me, sir."

"Who, then, sir?"

"Red Cap."

"You lie, sir."

"Who, then, sir?"

"Blue Cap, Blue Cap."

"You lie, sir."

"Who, then, sir?"

"Yellow Cap, Yellow Cap."

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Yellow Cap unfortunately did not give the lie in time, for which he was severely punished, and the game then continued.

But the part of the game which created the most mirth was providing a goose for the tailors, which was accomplished by some of their confederates throwing into the circle any bystander who was not on his guard, and who, immediately that he was thrown in, was thrashed and kicked by the whole circle until he could make his escape. An attempt of this kind was soon made upon Seymour, who being well acquainted with the game, and perceiving the party rushing on him to push him in, dropped on his hands and knees, so that the other was caught in his own trap by tumbling over Seymour into the circle himself, from which he at last escaped, as much mortified by the laugh raised against him as with the blows which he had received.

Seymour, who was ready to join in any fun, applied for work, and was admitted among the journeymen.

"What's your name?"

"Dandy Grey Russet Cap," replied Seymour, selecting a colour which would give him ample time for answering to his call.

"Oh, I'll be d—d but you're an old hand," observed one of the party, and the game continued with as much noise as ever.

But we must leave it and return to Mr. Skrimmage, who was a singular, if not solitary, instance of a person in one of the lowest grades of the service having amassed a large fortune. He had served his time under an attorney, and from that situation, why or wherefore the deponent sayeth not, shipped on board a man-of-war in the capacity of a ship's clerk. The vessel which first received him on board was an old fifty-gun ship of two decks, a few of which remained in the service at that time, although they have long been dismissed and broken up. Being a dull sailer, and fit for nothing else, she was constantly employed in protecting large convoys of merchant vessels to America and the West Indies. Although other men-of-war occasionally assisted her in her employ, the captain of the fifty-gun ship, from long standing, was invariably the senior officer, and the masters of the merchant vessels were obliged to go on board his

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ship to receive their convoy instructions, and a distinguishing pennant, which is always given without any fee.

But Skrimmage, who had never been accustomed to deliver up any paper without a fee when he was in his former profession, did not feel inclined to do so in his present. Make a direct charge he dare not—he therefore hit upon a *ruse de guerre* which effected his purpose. He borrowed from different parties seven or eight guineas, and when the masters of merchant vessels came on board for their instructions, he desired them to be shown down into his cabin, where he received them with great formality, and very nicely dressed. The guineas were spread upon the desk, so that they might be easily reckoned.

“Sit down, captain; if you please, favour me with your name and that of your ship.” As he took these down, he carelessly observed, “I have delivered but seven copies of the instructions to-day as yet.”

The captain having nothing to do in the meantime, naturally cast his eyes round the cabin and was attracted by the guineas, the number of which exactly tallied with the number of instructions delivered. It naturally occurred to him that they were the clerk's perquisites of office.

“What is the fee, sir?”

“Whatever you please—some give a guinea, some two.”

A guinea was deposited; and thus with his nest-eggs, Mr. Skrimmage, without making a direct charge, contrived to pocket a hundred guineas, or more, for every convoy that was put under his captain's charge. After four years, during which he had saved a considerable sum, the ship was declared unserviceable, and broken up, and Mr. Skrimmage was sent on board of the guardship, where his ready wit immediately pointed out to him the advantages which might be reaped by permanently belonging to her, as clerk of the ship and caterer of the midshipmen's berth. After serving in her for eight years, he was offered his rank as purser, which he refused upon the plea of being a married man, and preferring poverty with Mrs. S—to rank and money without her. At this the reader will not be astonished when he is acquainted, that the situation which he held was, by his dexterous plans, rendered so lucrative, that in the course of twelve years, with principal and accumulating interest, he had amassed the sum of £15,000.

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A guardship is a receiving-ship for officers and men, until they are enabled to join, or are drafted to, their respective ships. The consequence is, that an incessant change is taking place—a midshipman sometimes not remaining on board of her for more than three days before an opportunity offers of joining his ship. In fact, when we state that, during the war, upwards of one thousand midshipmen were received and sent away from a guardship in the course of twelve months, we are considerably within the mark. Now, as Mr. Skrimmage always received one guinea as entrance to the mess and a week's subscription in advance, and, moreover, never spent even the latter, or had his accounts examined, it is easy to conceive what a profitable situation he had created for himself. Mrs. Skrimmage, also, was a useful helpmate; she lived on board, at little expense, and by her attention to the dear little middies and their wearing apparel, who were sent on board to join some ship for the first time, added very considerably to his profits.

Her history was as follows. It had three eras: she had been a lady's-maid in town; and in this situation acquiring a few of the practices of "high life," she had become something else on the town; and, finally, Mrs. Skrimmage. With a view of awing his unruly associates into respect, Mr. Skrimmage (as well as his wife) was particularly nice in his dress and his conversation, and affected the gentleman, as she did the lady: this generally answered pretty well; but sometimes unpleasant circumstances would occur, to which his interest compelled Mr. Skrimmage to submit. It may be as well here to add, that, at the end of the war, Mr. Skrimmage applied for his promotion for long service, and obtaining it, added his purser's half-pay to the interest of his accumulated capital, and retired from active service.

The steward and his boy entering the gun-room with two enormous black tea-kettles, put an end to the boisterous amusement. It was the signal for tea.

"Hurrah for Scaldchops!" cried the master tailor, rising from the game, which was now abandoned. A regiment of cups and saucers lined the two sides of the long table, and a general scramble ensued for seats.

"I say, Mr. *Cribbage*," cried an old master's-mate to the caterer, who had entered shortly after the tea-kettles, and



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assumed his place at the end of the table, "what sort of stuff do you call this?"

"What do you mean to imply, sir?" replied Mr. Skrimmage, with a pompous air.

"Mean to ply?—why, I mean to ply, that there's d—d little tea in this here water; why, I've seen gin as dark a colour as this."

"Steward," said Mr. Skrimmage, turning his head over his shoulder towards him, "have you not put the established allowance into the teapot?"

"Yes, sir," replied the steward; "a teaspoonful for every gentleman, and one for coming up."

"You hear, gentlemen," said Mr. Skrimmage.

"Hear!—yes, but we don't taste. I should like to see it sarved out," continued the master's-mate.

"Sir," replied Mr. Skrimmage, "I must take the liberty to observe to you, that that is a responsibility never entrusted to the steward. The established allowance is always portioned out by Mrs. Skrimmage herself."

"D—n Mrs. Skrimmage," said a voice from the other end of the table.

"What!" cried the indignant husband; "what did I hear? Who was that?"

"'Twas this young gentleman, Mr. Caterer," said a malicious lad, pointing to one opposite.

"Me, sir?" replied the youngster, recollecting the game they had just been playing; "you lie, sir."

"Who then, sir?"

"Black Cap—Black Cap," pointing to another.

"I d—n Mrs. Skrimmage! You lie, sir."

"Who then, sir?"

"Red Cap—Red Cap."

"I d—n Mrs. Skrimmage? You lie, sir."

And thus was the accusation bandied about the table, to the great amusement of the whole party except the caterer, who regretted having taken any notice of what had been said.

"Really, gentlemen, this behaviour is such as cannot be tolerated," observed Mr. Skrimmage, who invariably preferred the *suaviter in modo*. "As caterer of this berth——"

"It is your duty to give us something to eat," added one of the midshipmen.

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"Gentlemen, you see what there is on the table; there are rules and regulations laid down, which cannot be deviated from, and——"

"And those are, to starve us. I've paid six-and-twenty shillings, and have not had six-and-twenty mouthfuls in the three days that I have been here. I should like to see your accounts, Mr. Caterer."

"Bravo! let's have his accounts," roared out several of the party.

"Gentlemen, my accounts are ready for inspection, and will bear, I will venture to assert, the most minute investigation; but it must be from those who have a right to demand it, and I cannot consider that a person who has only been in the ship for three days has any pretence to examine them."

"But I have been in the ship three weeks," said another, "and have paid you one pound sixteen shillings. I have a right, and now I demand them; so let us have the accounts on the table, since we can get nothing else."

"The accounts—the accounts!" were now vociferated for by such a threatening multitude of angry voices, that Mr. Skrimmage turned pale with alarm, and thought it advisable to bend to the threatening storm.

"Steward, present the gentlemen's respects to Mrs. Skrimmage, and request that she will oblige them by sending in the mess account-book. You understand—the gentlemen's respects to Mrs. Skrimmage."

"D—n Mrs. Skrimmage," again cried out one of the midshipmen, and the game of goose was renewed with the phrase, until the steward returned with the book.

"Mrs. Skrimmage's compliments to the gentlemen of the gun-room mess, and she has great pleasure in complying with their request; but in consequence of her late indisposition, the accounts are not made up further than to the end of last month."

This was the plan upon which the wily clerk invariably acted, as it put an end to all inquiry; but the indignation of the midshipmen was not to be controlled, and as they could not give it vent in one way, they did in another.

"Gentlemen," said one of the oldest of the fraternity, imitating Mr. Skrimmage's style, "I must request that you will be pleased not to kick up such a d—d row, because I

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wish to make a speech ; and I request that two of you will be pleased to stand sentries at the door, permitting neither ingress nor egress, that I may ' spin my yarn ' without interruption.

"Gentlemen, we have paid our mess-money, and we have nothing to eat. We have asked for the accounts, and we are put off with 'indisposition.' Now, gentlemen, as there can be no doubt of the caterer's honour, I propose that we give him a receipt in full."

"And here's a pen to write it with," cried out another, holding up the sleeve-board with which they had been playing the game.

"Then, gentlemen, are you all agreed—to cobb the caterer?"

The shouts of assent frightened Mr. Skrimmage, who attempted to make his escape by the gun-room door, but was prevented by the two sentries, who had been placed there on purpose. He then requested to be heard—to be allowed to explain ; but it was useless. He was dragged to the table, amidst an uproar of laughter and shouting. "Extreme bad headaches"—"Mrs. Skrimmage"—"nervous"—"ample satisfaction"—"conduct like gentlemen"—"complain to first lieutenant"—were the unconnected parts of his expostulation which could be distinguished. He was extended across the table, face downwards ; the lappels of his coat thrown up, and two dozen blows with the sleeve-board were administered with such force that his shrieks were even louder than the laughter and vociferation of his assailants.

During the infliction, the noise within was so great that they did not pay attention to that which was outside, but as soon as Mr. Skrimmage had been put on his legs again, and the tumult had partially subsided, the voice of the master-at-arms requesting admittance and the screaming of Mrs. Skrimmage were heard at the door, which continued locked and guarded. The door was opened, and in flew the lady.

"My Skrimmage ! my Skrimmage !—what have the brutes been doing to you ? Oh, the wretches !" continued the lady, panting for breath, and turning to the midshipmen, who had retreated from her—"you shall all be turned out of the service—you shall—that you shall. We'll see—we'll write for a court-martial—ay, you may laugh, but we will. Contempt to a superior officer—clerk and caterer, indeed ! The service has come to a pretty pass—you villains ! You may

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grin—I'll tear the eyes out of some of you, that I will. Come, Mr. Skrimmage, let us go on the quarter-deck and see if the service is to be trifled with. Dirty scum indeed——” and the lady stopped for want of breath, occasioned by the rapidity of her utterance.

“Gentlemen,” said the master-at-arms, as soon as he could obtain hearing, “the first lieutenant wishes to know the reason why you are making such a noise?”

“Our compliments to Mr. Phillips, and we have been settling the mess-account, and taking the change out of the caterer.”

“Yes,” continued Mrs. Skrimmage, “you villains, you have, you paltry cheats—you blackguards—you warmin—you scum of the earth—you grinning monkeys—you!—don't put your tongue into your cheek at me, you—you beast—you ill-looking imp, or I'll write the ten commandments on your face—I will—ay, that I will—cowardly set of beggars——” (No more breath.)

“I'll tell you what, marm,” rejoined the old master's-mate, “if you don't clap a stopper on that jaw of yours, by George, we'll cobb you.”

“Cobb me!—you will, will you? I should like to see you. I dare you to cobb me, you wretches?”

“Cobb her, cobb her!” roared out all the midshipmen, who were irritated at her language; and in a moment she was seized by a dozen of them, who dragged her to the table. Mrs. Skrimmage struggled in vain, and there appeared every chance of the threat being put in force.

“Oh—is this the way to treat a lady?—Skrimmage! help, help!”

Skrimmage, who had been battered almost to stupefaction, roused by the call of his frightened wife, darted to her, and throwing his arm round her waist—“Spare her, gentlemen, spare her for mercy's sake, spare her—or,” continued he, in a faltering voice, “if you will cobb her, let it be over all.”

The appeal in favour of modesty and humanity had its due weight; and Mr. and Mrs. Skrimmage were permitted to leave the gun-room without further molestation. The lady, however, as soon as she had obtained the outside of the gun-room door, forgetting her assumed gentility, turned back, and shaking her fist at her persecutors, made use of language with a repetition of which we will not offend our readers—and then, arm-in-arm with her husband, quitted the gun-room.

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" 'Mrs. Skrimmage's compliments to the gentlemen of the gun-room mess,' " cried one of the midshipmen, mimicking, which was followed by a roar of laughter, when the quartermaster again made his appearance.

" Gentlemen, the first lieutenant says that all those who are waiting for a passage round to Plymouth are to be on deck with their traps immediately. There's a frigate ordered round—she has the blue-peter up, and her topsails are sheeted home."

This put an end to further mischief, as there were at least twenty of them whose respective ships were on that station. In the meantime, while they were getting ready, Mr. Skrimmage having restored the precision of his apparel, proceeded to the quarter-deck and made his complaint to the first lieutenant; but these complaints had been repeatedly made before, and Mr. Phillips was tired of hearing them, and was aware that he deserved his fate. Mr. Skrimmage was therefore silenced with the usual remark, "How can I punish these young men, if they are in the wrong, who slip through my fingers immediately?—the parties you complain of are now going down the side. Why don't you give up the caterership?"

But this, for the reasons before stated, did not suit Mr. Skrimmage, who returned below. For a day or two the mess was better supplied, from fear of a repetition of the dose; after that, it went on again as before.

## CHAPTER XLI

All desperate hazards courage do create,  
As he plays frankly who has least estate.

DRYDEN.

——It were all one,  
That I should love a bright particular star,  
And think to wed it.

SHAKSPEARE.

SEYMOUR was soon weary of the endless noise and confusion to which he was subjected on board of the guardship, and he wrote to Captain M——, requesting that he might be permitted to join some vessel on active service until the

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period should arrive when the former would be enabled to resume the command of his ship. The answer from his patron informed him, that the time of his renewal of his professional duties would be uncertain, not having hitherto derived much benefit from his return to England: that as the *Aspasia* was daily expected to arrive from the mission on which she had been despatched, and would then remain on Channel service, ready to be made over to him as soon as his health should be re-established, he would procure an order for him to join her as soon as she arrived. He pointed out to him that he would be more comfortable on board a ship in which he had many old messmates and friends than in any other, to the officers of which he would be a perfect stranger: that, in the meantime, he had procured leave of absence for him, and requested that he would pay him a visit at his cottage near Richmond, to the vicinity of which place he had removed by the advice of his medical attendants.

Seymour gladly availed himself of this opportunity of seeing his protector, and after a sojourn of three weeks, returned to Portsmouth to join the *Aspasia*, which had, for some days, been lying at Spithead. Most of the commissioned, and many of the junior, officers who had served in the West Indies were still on board of her, anxiously waiting for the return of Captain M——, whose value as a commanding officer was more appreciated for the change which had taken place. Seymour was cordially greeted by his former shipmates, not only for his own sake, but from the idea that his having rejoined the frigate was but a precursor of the reappearance of Captain M—— himself.

There is, perhaps, no quality in man partaking of such variety, and so difficult to analyse, as courage, whether it be physical or mental, both of which are not only innate, but to be acquired. The former, and the most universal, is most capriciously bestowed; sometimes, although rarely, Nature has denied it altogether. We have, therefore, in the latter instance, courage nil, as a zero, courage negative, half-way up, and courage positive, at the top, which may be considered as "blood heat," and upon this thermometrical scale the animal courage of every individual may be placed. Courage nil, or cowardice, needs no explanation. Courage negative, which is the most common, is that degree of firmness which will enable



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a person to do his duty when danger comes to him ; he will not avoid danger, but he will not exactly seek it. Courage positive, when implanted in a man, will induce him to seek danger, and find opportunities of distinguishing himself where others can see none. Courage negative is a passive feeling, and requires to be roused. Courage positive is an active and restless feeling, always on the look-out.

An extreme susceptibility, and a phlegmatic indifference of disposition, although diametrically in opposition to each other, will produce the same results ; in the former, it is mental, in the latter, animal courage. Paradoxical as it may appear, the most certain and most valuable description of courage is that which is acquired from the fear of shame. Further, there is no talent which returns more fold than courage, when constantly in exercise ; for habit will soon raise the individual whose index is near to zero, to the degree in the scale opposite to courage negative ; and the possessor of courage negative will rise up to that of courage positive ; although, from desuetude, they will again sink to their former position.

It is generally considered that men are naturally brave ; but as, without some incentive, there would be no courage, I doubt the position. I should rather say that we were naturally cowards. Without incitement, courage of every description would gradually descend to the zero of the scale ; the necessity of some incentive to produce it, proves that it is "against nature." As the ferocity of brutes is occasioned by hunger, so is that of man by "hungering" after the coveted enjoyments of life, and in proportion as this appetite is appeased, so is his courage decreased. If you wish animals to fight, they must not be over-fed ; and if a nation wishes to have good officers, it must swell their pride by decorations, and keep them poor. There are few who do not recollect the answer of the soldier to his general, who had presented him with a purse of gold in reward of a remarkable instance of gallantry, and who, a short time afterwards, requiring something extremely hazardous to be attempted, sent for the man, and expressed his wish that he would volunteer. "General," said he, "send a man who has NOT GOT a purse of gold."

The strongest incitement to courage is withdrawn by the

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possession of wealth. Other worldly possessions also affect it. Lord St. Vincent, when he heard that any captain had married, used to observe emphatically, "that he was d—d for the service"—no compliment to the officer, but a very handsome one to the sex, as it implied that their attractions were so great that we could not disengage ourselves from our thralldom—or, in fact, that there were no such things as bad or scolding wives.

Finally, this quality, which is considered as a virtue, and to entitle us to the rewards bestowed upon it by the fair sex, who value it above all others, is so wholly out of our control, that when suffering under sickness or disease it deserts us; nay, for the time being, a violent stomach-ache will turn a hero into a poltroon.

So much for a dissertation on courage, which I should not have ventured to force upon the reader, had it not been to prepare him for the character which I am about to introduce; and when it is pointed out how many thousands of officers were employed during the last war, I trust it will not be considered an imputation upon the service, by asserting that there were some few who mistook their profession.

The acting captain of the *Aspasia*, during the early part of his career in the service (had there been such a thermometer as I have described, by which the heat of temperament in the party would have been precisely ascertained), on placing its bulb upon the palm of his hand, would have forced the mercury something between the zero and courage negative, towards the zero—"more yes than no," as the Italian said; but now that he was a married man, above fifty years of age, with a large family, he had descended in the scale to the absolute zero.

It may, then, be inquired, why he requested to be employed during the war? Because he liked full pay and prize-money when it could be obtained without risk, and because his wife and family were living on shore in a very snug little cottage at Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, which cottage required nothing but furniture and a few other trifles to render it complete. Marriage had not only subtracted from the courage of this worthy officer, but, moreover, a little from his honesty. Captain Capperbar (for such was his name) should have been brought up as a missionary, for he could convert

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anything, and expend more profusely than any Bible Society. The name by which he had christened his domicile was probably given as a sort of salve to his conscience. He called it the "Ship;" and when he signed his name to the expense books of the different warrant officers, without specifying the exact use to which the materials were applied, the larger proportions were invariably expended, by the general term, for "*Ship's* use." He came into harbour as often as he could, always had a demand for stores to complete, and a defect or two for the dockyard to make good; and the admiral, who was aware of Mrs. Capperbar being a near resident, made every reasonable allowance for his partiality to Spithead. But we had better introduce the captain, sitting at his table in the fore-cabin, on the day of his arrival in port, the carpenter having obeyed his summons.

"Well, Mr. Cheeks, what are the carpenters about?"

"Weston and Smallbridge are going on with the chairs—the whole of them will be finished to-morrow."

"Well?"

"Smith is about the chest of drawers, to match the one in my Lady Capperbar's bedroom."

"Very good. And what is Hilton about?"

"He has finished the spare-leaf of the dining-table, sir; he is now about a little job for the second lieutenant."

"A job for the second lieutenant, sir? How often have I told you, Mr. Cheeks, that the carpenters are not to be employed, except on ship's duty, without my special permission."

"His standing bedplace is broke, sir; he is only getting out a chock or two."

"Mr. Cheeks, you have disobeyed my most positive orders. By-the-bye, sir, I understand you were not sober last night."

"Please your honour," replied the carpenter, "I wasn't drunk—I was only a little fresh."

"Take you care, Mr. Cheeks. Well, now, what are the rest of your crew about?"

"Why, Thompson and Waters are cutting out the pales for the garden, out of the jib-booms; I've saved the heel to return."

"Very well; but there won't be enough, will there?"

"No, sir, it will take a hand-mast to finish the whole."

"Then we must expend one when we go out again. We can

## THE KING'S OWN

carry away a topmast, and make a new one out of the hand-mast at sea. In the meantime, if the sawyers have nothing to do, they may as well cut the palings at once. And now, let me see—oh! the painters must go on shore, to finish the attics.”

“Yes, sir, but my Lady Capperbar wishes the *jealonsees* to be painted vermilion; she says, it will look more rural.”

“Mrs. Capperbar ought to know enough about ship’s stores by this time, to be aware that we are only allowed three colours. She may choose or mix them as she pleases; but as for going to the expense of buying paint, I can’t afford it. What are the rest of the men about?”

“Repairing the second cutter, and making a new mast for the pinnacle.”

“By-the-bye—that puts me in mind of it—have you expended any boat’s masts?”

“Only the one carried away, sir.”

“Then you must expend two more. Mrs. C—— has just sent me off a list of a few things that she wishes made while we are at anchor, and I see two poles for clothes-lines. Saw off the sheave-holes, and put two pegs through at right angles—you know how I mean.”

“Yes, sir. What am I to do, sir, about the cucumber frame? My Lady Capperbar says that she must have it, and I haven’t glass enough—they grumbled at the yard last time.”

“Mrs. C—— must wait a little. What are the armourers about?”

“They have been so busy with your work, sir, that the arms are in a very bad condition. The first lieutenant said yesterday that they were a disgrace to the ship.”

“Who dared say that?”

“The first lieutenant, sir.”

“Well, then, let them rub up the arms, and let me know when they are done, and we’ll get the forge up.”

“The armourer has made six rakes, and six hoes, and the two little hoes for the children; but he says he can’t make a spade.”

“Then I’ll take his warrant away, by Heaven! since he does not know his duty. That will do, Mr. Cheeks. I shall overlook your being in liquor, this time; but take care—send the boatswain to me.”

“Yes, sir,” and the carpenter quitted the cabin.

## THE KING'S OWN

"Well, Mr. Hurley," said the captain, as the boatswain stroked down his hair, as a mark of respect, when he entered the cabin, "are the cots all finished?"

"All finished, your honour, and slung, except the one for the babby. Had not I better get a piece of duck for that?"

"No, no—number seven will do as well; Mrs. C—— wants some fearnought, to put down in the entrance hall."

"Yes, your honour."

"And some cod-lines laid up for clothes-lines."

"Yes, your honour."

"Stop, let me look at my list—'Knife-tray, meat-screen, leads for window-sashes'—ah! have you any hand-leads not on charge?"

"Yes, your honour, four or five."

"Give them to my steward.—'Small chair for Ellen—canvas for veranda.'—Oh! here's something else—have you any painted canvas?"

"Only a waist-hammock-cloth, sir, ready fitted."

"We must expend that; 'no old on charge.' Send it on shore to the cottage, and I shall want some pitch."

"We've lots of that, your honour."

"That will do, Mr. Hurley; desire the sentry to tell my steward to come here."

"Yes, your honour." (Exit boatswain, and enter steward.)

This personage belonged to the party of marines who had been drafted into the ship—for Captain Capperbar's economical propensities would not allow him to hire a servant brought up to the situation, who would have demanded wages independent of the ship's pay. Having been well drilled at barracks, he never answered any question put to him by an officer without recovering himself from his usual "stand-at-ease" position—throwing shoulders back, his nose up in the air, his arms down his sides, and the palms of his hands flattened on his thighs. His replies were given with all the brevity that the question would admit, or rapid articulation on his own part would enable him to confer.

"Thomas, are the sugar and cocoa ready to go on shore?"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't forget to send that letter to Mr. Gibson for the ten dozen port and sherry."

"No, sir."

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"When it comes on board, you'll bring it on shore a dozen at a time in the hair trunk."

"Yes, sir."

"Mind you don't let any of the hay peep outside."

"No, sir."

"Has the cooper finished the washing-tubs?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the small kids?"

"No, sir."

"Have you inquired among the ship's company for a gardener?"

"Yes, sir; there's a marine kept the garden of the major in the barracks."

"Don't forget to bring him on shore."

"No, sir."

"Recollect, too, that Mrs. Capperbar wants some vinegar—the boatswain's is the best—and a gallon or two of rum—and you must corn some beef. The harness cask may remain on shore, and the cooper must make me another."

"Yes, sir."

"Master Henry's trousers—are they finished yet?"

"No, sir; Spriggs is at them now. Bailly and James are making Miss Ellen's petticoats."

"And the shoes for Master John—are they finished?"

"Yes, sir."

"And Master Henry's?"

"No, sir. Wilson says that he has lost Master Henry's measure."

"Careless scoundrel! he shall have four-water grog for a week; and, steward, take three bags of bread on shore, and forty pounds of flour."

"Yes, sir."

"That's all. Oh no—don't forget to send some pease on shore for the pig."

"No, sir," and the steward departed to execute his variety of commissions.

The present first lieutenant of the *Aspasia*, who upon the promotion of the former had been selected by Captain M—— previous to his quitting the ship, was an excellent officer and a pleasant, light-hearted messmate, very superior in talent and information to the many.



## THE KING'S OWN

The conduct of Captain Capperbar was a source of annoyance to him, as he frequently could not command the services of the different artificers when they were required for the ship. He had, however, been long enough in the service to be aware that it was better to make the best of it than to create enemies by impeaching the conduct of his superior officer. As the command of Captain Capperbar was but temporary, he allowed him to proceed without expostulation, contenting himself with turning his conduct into a source of conversation and amusement.

"Well, Prose, how do you like the new skipper?" inquired Seymour, soon after his arrival on board.

"Why, I do declare, I can hardly tell. He's a very good-tempered man, but he don't exactly treat us midshipmen as if we were officers or gentlemen; and as for his wife, she is really too bad. I am sent every day on shore to the cottage, because I belong to the captain's gig. They never ask me to sit down, but set me to work somehow or another. The other day he had a boat's crew on shore digging up a piece of ground for planting potatoes, and he first showed me how to cut the eyes, and then gave me a knife and ordered me to finish the whole bag which lay in the field, and to see that the men worked properly at the same time. I never cut potatoes into little bits before, except at table after they were boiled."

"Well, that was too bad; but, however, you'll know how to plant potatoes in future—there's nothing like knowledge."

"And then he sends the nurse and children for an airing, as he calls it, on the water, and I am obliged to take them. I don't like pulling maid-servants about."

"That's quite a matter of taste, Prose; some midshipmen do."

"What do you think Mrs. Capperbar asked me to do the other day?"

"I'm sure I can't guess."

"Why, to shell peas."

"Well, did you oblige her?"

"Why, yes, I did; but I did not like it—and the other day the captain sent me out to walk with the nurse and children, that I might carry Master Henry if he was tired."

"They have observed the versatility of your genius."

"She made me hunt the hedges for a whole morning after eggs, because she was convinced that one of the hens laid astray."

## THE KING'S OWN

"Did you find any?"

"No; and when I came back to tell her so, she got into a rage, and threatened to make the captain flog me."

"The devil she did!"

"A devil she is," continued Prose. "She runs about the house—'Captain Capperbar' this—'Captain Capperbar' that—'I will'—'I will not'—'I insist'—'I am determined.' But," continued Prose, "as you belonged to the captain's gig before, you will of course take her again, and I shall be very glad to give the charge up to you."

"Not for the world, my dear Prose; what may ensure your promotion would be my ruin. I never nursed a child or shelled a pea in my life; the first I should certainly let fall, and the second I probably should eat for my trouble. So pray continue at your post of honour, and I will go for the fresh beef every morning as you were accustomed to do when we were last in port."

Captain M—— did not receive the immediate benefit which he had anticipated from a return to his native land. Bath, Cheltenham, Devonshire, and other places were recommended one after the other by the physicians, until he was tired of moving from place to place. It was nearly two years before he felt his health sufficiently re-established to resume the command of the *Aspasia*, during which period the patience of his officers was nearly exhausted; and not only was all the furniture and fitting up of the cottage complete, but Captain Capperbar had provided himself with a considerable stock of materials for repairs and alterations. At last a letter from the captain to Macallan gave the welcome intelligence that he was to be down at Portsmouth in a few days, and that the ship was ordered to fit for foreign service.

We must not omit to mention here, that during these two years Scymour had been able to procure frequent leave of absence, which was invariably passed at the M'Elvinas'; and that the terms of intimacy on which he was received at the Hall, and his constant intercourse with Emily, produced an effect which a more careful mother would have guarded against. The youth of eighteen and the girl of sixteen had feelings very different from those which had actuated them on their first acquaintance; and Seymour, who was staying at the M'Elvinas' when the expected arrival of Captain M——

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was announced, now felt what pain it would be to part with Emily. The intelligence was communicated in a letter from Prose, when he was sitting alone with M'Elvina, and the bare idea of separation struck him to the heart.

M'Elvina, who had often expressed his opinion on the subject to his wife, had been anxious that our hero should be sent on a foreign station, before he had allowed a passion to take so deep a root in his heart, that to eradicate it would be a task of great effort and greater pain. Aware from the flushed face of Seymour of what was passing within, he quietly introduced the subject, by observing that in all probability his favourite, Emily, would be married previous to his return—pointing out that an heiress of so large a property would have a right to expect to unite herself with one in the highest rank of society.

Seymour covered his face with his hands as he leant over the table. He had no secrets from M'Elvina, and acknowledged the truth of the observation. "I have brought up the subject, my dear boy," continued M'Elvina, "because I have not been blind, and I am afraid that you will cherish a feeling which can only end in disappointment. She is a sweet girl; but you must, if possible, forget her. Reflect a moment. You are an orphan, without money and without family, although not without friends, which you have secured by your own merit; and you have only your courage and your abilities to advance you in the service. Can it, then, be expected that her parents would consent to a union; or would it be honourable in you to take any advantage of her youthful prepossession in your favour, and prevent her from reaping those advantages that her fortune and family entitle her to?"

Seymour felt bitterly the justice of the remark; a few tears trickled through his fingers, but his mind was resolved. He had thought to have declared his love before his departure, and have obtained an acknowledgment on her part; but he now made a firm resolution to avoid and to forget her. "I shall follow your advice, my dear sir, for it is that of a friend who is careful of my honour; but if you knew the state of mind that I am in!—How foolish and inconsiderate have I been!—I will not see her again."

"Nay, that would be acting wrongly; it would be quite unpardonable, after the kindness which you have received

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from Mrs. Rainscourt, not to call and wish them farewell. You must do it, Seymour. It will be an exertion, I acknowledge; but if I mistake not his character, not too great a one for William Seymour. Good-night, my dear boy."

On the ensuing morning Seymour, who had fortified himself in his good resolutions, walked to the Hall to announce his approaching departure on foreign service, and to take his farewell, his last farewell, of Emily. He found the carriage at the door, and Mrs. Rainscourt, in her pelisse and bonnet, about to pay a visit at some distance. She was sorry at the information, for Seymour was a great favourite, and delayed her departure for a quarter of an hour to converse with him; at the end of which Emily, who had been walking, came into the library. Communicating the intelligence to her daughter, Mrs. Rainscourt then bade him farewell, and expressing many wishes for his health and happiness, was handed by him into the carriage, and drove off, leaving Seymour to return to the library, and find himself—the very position he had wished to avoid—alone with Emily.

Emily Rainscourt was at this period little more than sixteen years old; but it is well known that in some families, as in some countries, the advance to maturity is much more rapid than in others. Such was the case with our heroine, who, from her appearance, was generally supposed to be at least two years older than she really was, and in her mind she was even more advanced than in her person.

Seymour returned to the library, where he found Emily upon the sofa. Her bonnet had been thrown off, and the tears that were coursing down her cheeks were hastily brushed away, at his entrance. He perceived it, and felt his case to be still more embarrassing.

"When do you go, William?" said Emily, first breaking silence.

"To-morrow morning. I have called to return my thanks to your mother, and to you, for your kindness to me; I shall ever remember it with gratitude."

Emily made no answer, but a deep sigh escaped.

"I shall," continued Seymour, "be away perhaps for years, and it is doubtful if ever we meet again. Our tracks in life are widely different. I am an orphan, without name or connection—or even home, except through the kindness of

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my friends: they were right when, in my childhood, they christened me the 'King's Own,' for I belong to nobody else. You, Miss Rainscourt" (Emily started, for it was the first time that he had ever called her so after the first week of their acquaintance), "with every advantage which this world can afford, will soon be called into society, in which I never can have any pretence to enter. You will in all probability form a splendid connection before (if ever) we meet again. You have my prayers, and shall have them when seas divide us, for your happiness."

Seymour was so choked by his feelings that he could say no more—and Emily burst into tears.

"Farewell, Emily! God in heaven bless you," said Seymour, recovering his self-possession.

Emily, who could not speak, offered her hand. Seymour could not control himself; he pressed her lips with fervour, and darted out of the room. Emily watched him, until he disappeared at the winding of the avenue, and then sat down and wept bitterly. She thought that he was unkind, when he ought to have been most fond—on the eve of a protracted absence. He might have stayed a little longer. He had never behaved so before; and she retired to her room, with her heart panting with anguish and disappointment. She felt how much she loved him, and the acknowledgment was embittered by the idea that this feeling was not reciprocal.

The next morning, when the hour had passed at which Seymour had stated that he was to leave the spot, Emily bent her steps to the cottage, that she might, by conversation with her friend Mrs. M'Elvina, obtain, if possible, some clue to the motives which had induced our hero to behave as we have narrated.

Susan was equally anxious to know in what manner Seymour had conducted himself, and soon obtained from Emily the information which she required. She then pointed out to her, as her husband had done to Seymour, the improbability, if not impossibility, of any happy result to their intimacy, and explained the honourable motives by which Seymour had been actuated—the more commendable, as his feelings on the subject were even more acute than her own. The weeping girl felt the truth of her remarks, as far as the justification of Seymour was attempted. Satisfied with the

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knowledge that he loved her, she paid little attention to the more prudent part of the advice, and made a resolution in his favour, which, as well as her attachment (unlike most others formed during the freshness of the heart), through time and circumstance, absence on his part. temptations on hers, continued steadfast and immovable to the last.

## CHAPTER XLII

First Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears ;  
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,  
Their children's cries unheard.

MILTON.

ONCE more the *Aspasia* flew upon the wings of the northern gale to secure her country's dominion over far-distant seas ; and many an anxious eye, that dwelt upon the receding shore, and many an aching heart, that felt itself severed from home and its endearments, did she carry away in her rapid flight. Some there were to whom the painful reflection presented itself—"Shall I e'er behold those cherished shores again?" This, however, was but a transitory feeling, soon chased away by Hope, who delights to throw her sunny beams on the distance, while she leaves the foreground to the dark reality of life. All felt deeply, but there was none whose mental sufferings could be compared with those of Seymour.

Captain M—— opened his sealed orders, and found that he was directed to proceed forthwith to the East Indies. He had been prepared for this, by indirect hints given to him by the First Lord of the Admiralty. There is nothing so tedious as making a passage, and of all others, that to the East Indies is the most disagreeable, especially at the time of which we are writing, when Sir H. Popham had not added the Cape of Good Hope to the colonial grandeur of the country—so that, in fact, there was no resting-place for the wanderer, tired with the unvarying monotony of sky and water. We shall therefore content ourselves with stating, that at the end of three months his Majesty's ship *Aspasia*



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dropped her anchor in Kedgerie Roads, and the captain of the same pilot schooner who had taken charge of her off the Sand-heads was put in requisition to convey Captain M—— and his despatches up to Calcutta. Courtenay, Macallan, and Seymour were invited to be of the party; and the next morning they shifted on board the pilot schooner, and commenced the ascent of the magnificent and rapid Hoogly.

The pilot captain, who, like all those who ply in this dangerous and intricate navigation, had been brought up to it from his youth, was a tall gaunt personage, of about fifty years of age, and familiar in his manner. Whether he had found some difficulty in keeping in check the passengers from the Indiamen whom he had been in the habit of taking up to Calcutta (whose spirits were, in all probability, rather buoyant upon their first release from the confinement of a tedious passage), or whether from a disposition naturally afraid of encroachment, he was incessantly informing you that "he was captain of his own ship." Although in all other parts he was polite, yet upon this he paid no respect to persons, as the Governor-General and his staff, much to their amusement, and occasionally to their annoyance, found to be the case when they ascended the river under his charge.

"Happy to see you on board, Captain M——. Hope you will make yourself comfortable, and call for everything you want. Boy, take this trunk down into the state cabin. Happy to see you, gentlemen, and beg you will consider yourselves quite at home—at the same time beg to observe that I'm captain of my own ship."

"So you ought to be," replied Captain M——, smiling, "if your ship was no larger than a nutshell. I'm captain of *my* own ship, I can assure you."

"Very glad we agree upon that point, Captain M——. Young gentleman," continued he, addressing himself to Courtenay, "you'll oblige me by not coming to an anchor on my hen-coops. If you wish to sit down, you can call for a chair."

"Rather annoying," muttered Courtenay, who did not much like being called "young gentleman."

"A chair for the young gentleman," continued the captain of the schooner. "Starboard a little, Mr. Jones—there is rather too much cable out, till the tide makes stronger. I presume you are not used to kedging, captain. It's a very

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pretty thing, as you will acknowledge. Starboard yet. Give her the helm quick, Mr. Thompson. Why, sir, do you know that I was once very nearly on shore on the tail of this very bank, because a young lady, who was going up to Calcutta, would take the helm? The mate could not prevent her—she refused to let it go; and when I commanded her, told me, with a laugh, that she could steer as well as I could. I was obliged to prove to her, in rather an unpleasant manner, that I was captain of my own ship.”

“Why, you did not flog her, did you, captain?”

“Why, no, not exactly that; but I was obliged to jerk the wheel round so quick, that I sprained both her wrists before she had time to let it go. It very near produced a mutiny. The girl fainted, or pretended to do so, and all the gentlemen passengers were in high wrath—little thinking, the fools, that I had saved their lives by what they called my barbarity. However, I told them, as soon as the danger was over, that I was captain of my own ship. Sweet pretty girl too, she was. We were within an inch of the bank, the tide running like a sluice, and should have turned the turtle the moment that we had struck. Such a thing as carrying politeness too far. If I had not twisted the wheel out of her hands as I did, in two minutes more the alligators would have divided her pretty carcass, and all the rest of us to boot. No occasion for that, Captain M——. There’s plenty of black fellows for them floating up and down all day long, as you will see.”

“They throw all their dead into the river, do they not?”

“All, sir. This is a continuation of the sacred river, the Ganges, and they believe that it ensures their going to heaven. Have you never been in India before?”

“Never.”

“Nor these three gentlemen?”

“Neither of them.”

“Oh, then,” cried the captain, his face brightening up at the intelligence, as it gave him an opportunity of amusing his passengers; “then, perhaps, you would not object to my explaining things to you as we go along?”

“On the contrary, we shall feel much indebted to you.”

“Observe,” said the captain, looking round as if to find an object to decide him where to begin—“do you see that body floating down the river with the crow perched upon it, and

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that black thing flush with the water's edge which nears it so fast—that's the head of an alligator; he is in chase of it."

The party directed their attention to the object; the alligator, which had the appearance of a piece of black wood floating down the stream, closed with the body; his upper jaw rose clear out of the water, and descended upon his prey, with which he immediately disappeared under the muddy water.

"By the Lord, Mr. Crow, but you'd a narrow chance, then," observed the captain; "you may thank your stars that you did not lose your life as well as your breakfast. Don't you think so, young gentleman?" continued the captain, addressing Courtenay.

"I think," observed Courtenay, "that Mr. Crow was not exactly captain of his own ship."

"Very true, sir. That point of land which we are just shutting in, Captain M——, is the end of Saugor Island, famous for Bengal tigers, and more famous once for the sacrifice of children. You have heard of it?"

"I have heard of it; but if you have ever witnessed the scene, I shall be obliged by your narration."

"I did once, Captain M——, but nothing would ever induce me to witness it again. I am very glad that Government has put a stop to it by force. You are aware that the custom arose from the natives attempting to avert any present or anticipated calamity, by devoting a child to propitiate the deity. On a certain day they all assembled in boats, with their victims, attended by their priests and music, and decorated with flowers. The gaiety of the procession would have induced you to imagine that it was some joyous festival, instead of a scene of superstition and of blood. It would almost have appeared as if the alligators and sharks were aware of the exact time and place, from the numbers that were collected at the spot where the immolation took place. My blood curdles now when I think of it. The cries of the natives, the shouting and encouraging of the priests, the deafening noise of the tom-toms, mixed with the piercing harsh music of the country, the hurling and tossing of the poor little infants into the water, and the splashing and contention of the ravenous creatures as they tore them limb from limb, within a few feet of their unnatural parents—the whole

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sea tinged with blood, and strewed with flowers! The very remembrance is sickening to me.

“One circumstance occurred, more horrid than all the rest. A woman had devoted her child—but she had the feelings of a mother, which were not to be controlled by the blindest superstition. From time to time she had postponed the fulfilment of the vow until the child had grown into a woman—for she was thirteen years old, which in this country is the marriageable age. Misfortune came on, and the husband was told by the priests that the deity was offended, and that the daughter must be sacrificed, or he would not be appeased. She was a beautiful creature for a native, and was to have been married about the very time that she was now to be sacrificed. I see her now—she was dark in complexion, as they all are, but her features were beautifully small and regular, and her form was perfect symmetry. They took off the gold ornaments with which she was decorated, and in their avarice removed her garments, as she implored and entreated on her knees in vain. The boat that she was in was closer to the shore than the others, and in shallow water. They forced her over the gunwale; she alighted on her feet, the water being up to her middle, and, by a miracle, escaped, before a shark or alligator could reach her, and gained the beach. I thought that she was saved, and felt more happy than if I had received a lac of rupees. But no—they landed from the boats, and pushed her into the water with long poles, while she screamed for pity. A large alligator swam up to her, and she fell senseless with fright, just before he received her in his jaws. So I don't think the poor creature suffered much after that, although the agony of anticipation must have been worse than the reality. That one instance affected me more than the scores of infants that were sacrificed to Moloch.”

Distressing as the narrative was, there was a novelty and interest in it, and a degree of feeling unexpectedly shown by the captain of the pilot vessel, that raised him in the opinion of Captain M——, who became anxious to obtain further information.

“They consider the river as sacred—do you imagine that they consider the alligators to be so?”

“I rather think that they do, sir, although I only judge

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from what I have seen, as I have read nothing about it. At all events, the presence of an alligator will not prevent them from performing a customary duty of their religion, which is, bathing in the sacred river. The people come down to bathe at the different ghauts, and if an alligator takes one of them down, it will not prevent the others from returning the next morning, even if one was to be taken away each succeeding day. I rather think that, in the discharge of a sacred duty, they consider all accidents of this kind as according to the will of the deity, and a sort of passport to heaven. A party of murderous villains turned this feeling of their countrymen to good account at a ghaut up the country. The natives had bathed there for centuries without any accident on record, when one day a woman disappeared under the water from amongst the rest, and every day for many weeks the same untoward circumstance occurred. It was supposed to be an alligator, but it was afterwards ascertained that this party of thieves had concealed themselves in the jungle on the opposite side of the river, which at that part was deep, but not very wide, and had a rope with a hook to it extended under water to the ghaut, where the people bathed. Some of the gang mingled with the bathers, and slipping down under water, made the rope fast to the legs of one of the women, who was immediately hauled under the water by his comrades concealed on the opposite side. You may be wondering why the rascals took so much trouble ; but, sir, the women of this country, especially those of high caste and who are rich, wear massive gold bangles upon their arms and legs, besides ornaments of great value on other parts of their person, and they never take them off when they bathe, as they are fastened on so as not to be removed. It was from the observation that this supposed alligator was very nice in his eating, as he invariably took away a Brachmany or a Rajahpoot girl, that the plot was discovered. We are now abreast of the Diamond Harbour, a sad, unhealthy place, I can assure you. Port a little, Mr. Jones—give five or six fathoms more cable ; we drag too fast. This is a very dangerous corner that we are turning now. When we are about eight miles above we shall bring up and go to dinner. I beg your pardon, young gentleman, but I'll thank you to leave the compasses alone. You'll excuse me, but I command this vessel."

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The pilot schooner rounded the point in safety, and in less than an hour brought up abreast of a large village. The captain stated that before dinner was over the tide would be too slack to go further on, and that he should remain there during the ebb, and not weigh till early the next morning. If, therefore, Captain M—— and the gentlemen felt inclined to take a stroll after dinner, a boat was at their service.

This was gladly assented to, and when dinner was over the captain of the schooner ordered the boat to be manned, and at the request of Captain M—— accompanied them on shore. On their landing, the flocking together of the inhabitants, and the noise of the music, announced that something more than usual was going on. On inquiry, the pilot captain informed them that the rajah of the village, who had ascended the river to perform his vows at some distant shrine, had not returned at the time that he was expected, and that the natives were afraid that some accident had occurred, and were in consequence propitiating the deity.

"You will now have an opportunity of beholding a very uncommon sight, which is the propitiatory dance to Shivu. There is no occasion for hurrying on so fast, young gentleman," continued the captain to Courtenay; "they will continue it till midnight."

"How excessively annoying that 'captain of his own ship' is," observed Courtenay to Macallan. "'Young gentleman!'—as if he could not see my epaulet."

"And yet there is nothing particularly to be affronted about. You have a very youthful appearance, and surely you are not displeased at being called a gentleman."

"Why, no; but that is the reason why I am annoyed, because I cannot take it up."

The party soon arrived at the site of the performance, which was on a small arena at the foot of a pagoda. The pagoda, which was not large, was evidently of very ancient date, and the carvings in bas-relief, which were continued round on its sides, representing processions in honour of the deity, were of a description much superior to the general execution of the Hindoos. The summit had bowed to time; perishable art had yielded to eternal nature—a small tree of the acacia species had usurped its place, and as it waved its graceful boughs to the breeze, appeared like a youthful queen reigning over and



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protecting the various shrubs and plants which luxuriated in the different crevices of the building. The dance was performed by about fifteen men, who were perfectly naked, their long hair falling below their waists. They went through a variety of rapid and strange evolutions, with a remarkable degree of precision, throwing about their hands and arms, and distorting their bodies, even to their fingers, in a dexterous and almost terrific manner. Sometimes they would suddenly form a circle, and with a simultaneous jerk of their heads throw their long hair, so that the ends would for a moment all meet together in the centre; at other times rolling their heads upon their shoulders with such astonishing velocity, that the eye was dazzled as they flew round and round, their hair radiating and diverging like the thrumbings of a mop when trundled by some strong-limbed housemaid. Their motions were regulated by the tom-toms, while an old Brahmin, with a ragged white beard, sat perched over the door of the pagoda, and with a small piece of bamboo struck upon the palm of his left hand, as he presided over the whole ceremony. After a few minutes of violent exertion he gave the signal to stop, and the performers, reeking with perspiration from every pore, bound up their wet hair over their foreheads, and made room for another set, who repeated the same evolutions.

"Is this religion?" inquired Seymour of Macallan, with some astonishment.

"That is a difficult question to answer in a few words. We must hope that it will be acceptable as such, for its votaries are at least sincere."

"Oh! no one can deny the *warmth* of their devotion," observed Courtenay drily.

The extreme heat and effluvia from the crowds of natives who witnessed the performance, forced Captain M—— and his companions unwillingly to abandon a scene so novel to a European. At the proposal of their conductor, they agreed to continue their walk to the outskirts of the village.

"I have often been ashore at this village," said the captain, "for they make the small mats here which are much in request at Calcutta, and I have frequent commissions for them. I can show you a novelty, if you wish, but I warn you that it will not be a very agreeable sight. The nullah that runs up here frequently leaves the dead bodies on the bank. It is now half-

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ebb, and if you wish to be introduced to vultures and jackals, I can show you plenty. But prepare yourself for a disgusting sight, for these animals do not congregate without a cause."

"To prey on the dead bodies, I presume?" replied Captain M——; "but as I have never seen these animals in their wild state, my curiosity bears down any anticipation of disgust. Let me not, however, influence those who do not feel inclined to encounter it."

"After witnessing that dance," observed Courtenay, taking a pinch of snuff, "I am fully prepared for any supper—it is impossible to be more disgusting."

Macallan and Seymour having expressed a wish to proceed, the pilot captain led the way, observing, "These animals are very necessary in the climates to which they are indigenous. they do the duty on shore which the alligators do in the water—that of public scavengers. The number of bodies that are launched into the Ganges is incredible. If a Hindoo is sick, he is brought down to the banks by his relatives, and if he does not recover, is thrown into the river. It is said, indeed, that if they are known to have money, their relatives do not wait till nature tires with their own exertions, but stop their mouths with clay, to prevent the possibility of recovery. There is a strong eddy round this point, and the bodies are swept into the nullah, and lie dry at the ebb."

"What do you call a nullah?" inquired Seymour.

"A nullah means a creek."

"I was so stupidly proud that I did not like to ask; but as Seymour has set the example," added Courtenay, "pray what is a ghaut?"

"A landing-place. See, there are some vultures perched upon that tree," continued the pilot captain, as they ascended the bank of the nullah. As soon as they arrived at the top they perceived, to their horror, seven or eight bodies lying in the mud, surrounded by vultures and jackals, who indiscriminately mingled together, were devouring them.

As they approached, the jackals retreated, looking repeatedly back, and sometimes facing round to the party, as if to inquire why they disturbed them in their repast. The vultures, on the contrary, did not attempt to move, until Macallan approached to within a few feet, and then those who could retired a few yards, or took their stations on the low

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branches of a tree close by, where others, who were already satiated, were sitting with drooping wings waiting for a return of appetite to recommence their banquet; others were so gorged, that they could not walk away. With their wings trailing in the mud, and their beaks separated as if gasping for breath, their brilliant eye dulled from repletion—there they remained, emitting an effluvium so offensive, that the numerous skeletons and the mingled remains of mortality were pleasing compared to such disgusting specimens of living corruption.

The party viewed the scene for a minute or two without speaking, and then turned away by common consent, and did not break silence until they had left it far behind.

“I begin to think,” said Courtenay, taking out his box, “that even a savage may occasionally have an excuse for taking snuff. Did you ever, in your whole life, come in contact with such a stench? Positively it has impregnated my snuff. There’s a strong twang of the vulture in it,” continued he, emptying the contents of the box upon the ground. “Now, that’s what I consider cursedly annoying.”

“We have indeed both seen and heard enough for one day,” observed Captain M——, as they entered the boat. “Many thanks to you, Mr. ——, for your attention to our wishes.”

“Not at all, Captain M——. I am only sorry that my sights have not been as agreeable as they are novel; but when you arrive at Calcutta you will find novelty combined with pleasure.”

After three days, which appeared to have fled with extra rapidity, from the constant amusement derived from the anecdotes and information imparted by the pilot captain, they sailed up Garden Reach with a fine breeze; and the city of palaces, the only one that deserves its name, burst in all its splendour upon their sight.

But I am not about to describe it: reader, do not be alarmed. It is not in my province as a novel-writer, and I make it a rule never to interfere with anybody else, if I can avoid it. Captain Hall, who has already done North and South America and Loo Choo, will, I have no doubt, be here by-and-by, taking Africa in his way; and as I can make up my three volumes of fiction without trespassing upon his matter of fact, I refer you to his work, when it appears, for a description of this gorgeous monument of rapine, this painted sepulchre of crime.

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### CHAPTER XLIII

The unwieldy elephant,  
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed  
His lithe proboscis.

MILTON.

CAPTAIN M—— remained but a few days at Calcutta, where he perceived little difference between the society and that of England, remarking only that the gentlemen were more hospitable, and the ladies drank more beer. But I am trespassing, notwithstanding my promise to the contrary at the end of the last chapter. I will therefore be off at once, before I am decidedly guilty of a breach of faith. The *Aspasia's* orders were to join the admiral, who had quitted the Bay of Bengal and proceeded to Bombay to avoid the monsoon, which was about to set in; and as there was no time to be lost, Captain M—— did not touch at Madras, but made all possible haste to gain the tranquil side of the peninsula. The Governor-General had requested that he would call at Travancore, to deliver a letter and complimentary present to the reigning queen, who held her possessions tributary to our Government.

The *Aspasia* anchored off the town, and was shortly afterwards boarded by one of the ministers of the queen, a venerable Mussulman, who brought a boatload of compliments and vegetables. He was accompanied by one or two others, among whom was a very indifferent interpreter. Captain M——, who was anxious to join the admiral, excused himself on the plea of ill health from delivering the present and letter in person, and expressed his wish to the deputy that he would take them in charge, stating that his services were required elsewhere; he requested that an answer to the letter might be sent on board as soon as possible. This was explained through the interpreter, and Captain M—— then inquired what time would probably elapse before the answer would be sent. The reply was, in a week or ten days.

“Ask him,” said Captain M——, “whether it cannot be sent to-morrow morning, as I am anxious to proceed?”

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After an exchange of several sentences between the interpreter and the deputy, who observed the most imperturbable gravity, the former replied to Captain M——,

"He say no, sar. Little people, like you and me, write letter very quick, all in one minute. Great people, like king and queen, not possible write letter less than week or ten days. Not fashion this country, sar."

The presents being placed in the boat, and the letter presented on a silver salver, the deputy made a low salaam, and departed. Captain M——, aware that all attempts to hasten them would be useless, made no further remarks on the subject. The next morning the same grave personage came on board, attended by the interpreter and his suite, with many compliments from their royal mistress, who had sent a present for the captain. During the time of the delivery and interpretation of the message, the natives who rowed in his boat handed up a large black monkey, with a long white beard extending over his chin and shoulders. The animal, who did not seem well pleased with his change of situation, and who was naturally of a vicious temperament, flew round and round the length of his tether, catching at the trousers of the sailors with his paws and teeth, and using the latter without the least ceremony.

"Queen say, sar—Many compliments, and tell you it very high caste monkey—very high caste, indeed, sar—very fine present, sar."

"It may be," observed Captain M—— to the first lieutenant; "but I wish she had saved herself the trouble. I must not refuse it; and what can we do with the brute?"

"It will amuse the men, sir; he seems to have plenty of devil in him."

"Oh!" roared Prose, "I do declare he has bit a piece out of my leg. High caste, indeed. I should like to give him a *high cast* overboard."

"Really, Prose, that's not so bad," observed Seymour. "Jerry was correct in his assertion that you had plenty of wit, only it required strong measures to extract it from you."

"Queen say, sar, write letter in five or six days, and say, suppose Captain Saib and officers come on shore, order everybody go hunt tiger. Queen tell people make everything proper. Very fine tiger-hunt, sar."

Captain M——, who was convinced that he must patiently

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await their own time, did not expostulate at the delay. Not wishing to avail himself of the offer, he requested the officers would consider themselves at liberty to accept the invitation, which was intended as a compliment, and therefore ought not to be refused.

A large party was formed, who on the ensuing day, accompanied by the deputy and his suite, and provided with fowling-pieces and muskets, landed at the town, where they were received by a few tom-toms and some hundreds of spectators. On their arrival at a house which had been prepared for their reception, they found a splendid breakfast awaiting them, to which they did as ample justice as a celebrated traveller to that which welcomed him at New York, although they did not, like him, revel to satiety, by plunging into oceans of tea and coffee.

Again the talents of the interpreter were called into action, to explain the reason why her Majesty could not receive them, which he did by laying his hand across what medical men would term the abdominal region (or, as Mrs. Ramsbottom would have said, "her abominable region"), and informing them that the queen was not well there. The party required no further explanation. They expressed their regrets, finished their breakfast, and then stated themselves ready to proceed.

"Game not come yet, sar—game not come till to-morrow."

"Well, then, we must go to it," replied Courtenay.

"Ah, gentleman not understand shoot in this country," continued the interpreter, who then, with some difficulty, contrived to make them understand that about four thousand men had been summoned to drive the game close to the town, and that, to ensure a sufficiency of sport, the sweep which they had taken was so great, that they would not close in till the next morning. He added, that as, perhaps, they would like to see the jungle to which the game was to be driven, horses and elephants had been prepared, and refreshments would be provided at any spot where they might wish to alight.

Macallan, who had provided himself with his hammers and other implements requisite in the pursuit of his favourite sciences, mineralogy and geology, was not sorry for the delay, and the remainder of the party were satisfied with the idea of a pleasant excursion. Previous to their setting off, a variety of performers were ordered in to amuse them with feats of



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juggling and address, which would have been acknowledged, if seen in England, to have far surpassed those of the celebrated Ramoo Samee and his associates. Amongst the rest, the majestic attitudes of the dancing snakes particularly attracted the attention of Macallan, who expressed to the interpreter his wish to procure one of the species (the famed cobra di capella), with the fangs not extracted. The interpreter, after a few words with the deputy, informed the doctor, with his usual politeness, "that all the snakes in the country were at the service of the gentleman; but take care not let bite, because very high caste snake."

"What do they mean by calling the animals of the country high caste?" inquired Seymour of Macallan. "I thought it was a term only applied to the Brachmins and Rajahpoots."

"Both the monkey and the snake are indirectly worshipped by these people," replied the doctor, "as their supposed deities are represented to have assumed these forms. The more vicious, or the more venomous, the higher they rank. The cobra di capella is, I believe, the most venomous serpent that exists."

"I do declare that that monkey deserves his rank," observed Prose. "I can hardly walk, as it is."

"Well, but you can ride, Prose, and here are the horses."

The horses, with three elephants, two with howdahs on their backs, and the other loaded with a large tent, were now paraded before the door; each horse was attended by his syce, or groom, who never quitted him, but fanned away the flies with a chowry or whisk, formed of a horse's tail. They were beautiful animals, but much too spirited for some of the party, who felt alarm at the very anticipation of the difficulty they would have in retaining their seats.

Prose, who had never been twice in his life on the back of any animal, was in sad trepidation; he looked first at the horses, who were plunging and rearing in the hands of the syces, who could with difficulty restrain their impatience, and then at the elephants, whose stupendous size, flourishing probosces, projecting tusks, and small, keen eyes, equally filled him with dismay.

"I do declare," observed Prose, affecting an extra limp, "my leg is very bad. I think——"

"Come, come, Mr. Prose, no hauling off; no leg-bail, if

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you please," said Courtenay, who, with Seymour, was already mounted upon a spirited Arabian; "take your choice—but go you must."

"Well, then, if I must, which would you advise me to take?"

"Take a horse," said Seymour, laughing; "of two evils, always choose the least."

"Take an elephant, Mr. Prose," cried Courtenay; "his size is double, but he'll give you less trouble."

"Why, that's a rhyme, I do declare; but how shall I get upon his back?"

"Oh, he'll take you up in his trunk, and put you on."

"Indeed he shall not," cried Prose, retreating some paces. "I say, Mr. Interpreter, how am I to get on the top of that great beast?"

"As you please, sar. Suppose you like get up before, he lift up his leg for you to climb up. Suppose you like to get up behind, he not say nothing. Suppose you wish go up his middle, you ab ladder."

"Well, then, Mr. Interpreter, I shall feel very much obliged to you for a ladder."

A ladder was brought. Prose and Macallan, with his implements, ascended to the howdah, fixed on the back of the enormous brute. The remainder of the party being ready, they set off, accompanied by the deputy, the interpreter, and several other handsomely attired natives, who out of compliment to the officers had been ordered to attend them. The country, like most parts of India near to the coast, consisted of paddy or rice fields, under water, diversified with intersecting patches of jungle and high trees. Occasionally they passed a deeper pool, where the buffaloes, with only their horns and tips of their noses to be seen, lay, with the whole of their enormous carcasses hid under the muddy water, to defend themselves from the attacks of the mosquitoes and the powerful rays of the sun.

"Look at the buffaloes, Prose."

"Where, Seymour? I can't see any. I never saw a buffalo in my life. It's like an ox, an't it?"

"It's very like a whale," replied Courtenay.

At this moment one of the herd, startled at the near approach of the cavalcade, rose from the stagnant pool where

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he had been lying, and presented his immense carcass, covered with mud, to Prose's wondering eyes.

"Lord, Molly, what a fish!" exclaimed Courtenay, with affected surprise, alluding to an old-standing naval joke.

"Now, is that a fish?" cried Prose, a little alarmed. "Well, I do declare! I say, Mr. Interpreter, what is that thing?"

"Call him buffalo, sar."

"Well, I do declare! I always thought that buffaloes were animals that lived on shore."

"Nothing like travelling, Mr. Prose," observed Courtenay; "you'll know a buffalo, now, if ever you happen to hook one when you are fishing out of the fore-chains."

"And you'll remember a high-caste monkey, if ever you meet with one again," added Seymour.

"That I shall, all the days of my life."

The country as they proceeded inland materially altered its features. Forests of large trees and fragments of rocks met their view instead of the paddy-fields which they had left behind; and Macallan now wished to descend, that he might collect geological specimens. Explaining his reasons, he desired the interpreter to order the elephant to stop.

"Suppose gentleman want stones, elephant give them," replied the interpreter; "no occasion for Saib to get off;" and explaining the doctor's wishes to the conductor of the elephant, the knowledge of which occasioned a laugh among the natives, who could not conceive why the doctor should want the stones, he continued, "Now, sar, you point any stone you want."

The doctor did so; and the conductor speaking to the elephant, the proboscis of the sagacious animal immediately handed up the one pointed out to his conductor, who passed it to Macallan.

For more than an hour the doctor amused himself with breaking and examining the different specimens presented to him, until he passed by an isolated mass, whose component parts, glittering in the sun, made him anxious to obtain a specimen. It was a large rock, about the size of six elephants, and the doctor pointed to it.

"Ah, sar," interrupted the interpreter, "elephant very strong beast, but no lift that."

## THE KING'S OWN

"I did not imagine that he would, but I must dismount to examine it," replied Macallan gravely, who was absorbed in his scientific pursuits.

The elephant stopped; and the doctor, not aware of the great height, attempted to slip down his side; he succeeded in reaching the ground, not exactly on his feet, to the great amusement of the party. Regardless of trifles when in pursuit of science, he desired Prose to throw him down his bag of implements, and proceeded to the object of his investigation, which appeared to him so peculiar, that he requested the others to continue their excursion, and leave him to be picked up on their return.

"Ah, massa! like stop this place?" said the interpreter.

"Yes," replied the doctor.

"Do you really intend to remain here?" inquired Courtenay.

"I do; it is a very remarkable specimen of cinnamon-stone, and I must procure some of it if possible."

"Well, I do declare," said Prose; "I thought cinnamon grew upon trees. Doctor, I should like to stay with you, for this beast does shake me so, I'm quite sore—and I've such a stitch in my side."

Prose accordingly prepared to descend, and was recommended by the interpreter to slide down by the hind leg of the animal.

"He won't kick, will he?"

"Elephant no kick, sar," and Prose descended in safety, while the remainder of the party continued their excursion.

The doctor walked several times round the rock to find a point upon which he would be able to make some impression with his implements; but the fragment, which had probably remained there since the Deluge, without having been honoured by a visit from a naturalist, was worn quite smooth by time, and presented no acute angle, within reach, upon which his hammer could make any impression; nor could he climb it, for it rose from its base in almost a perpendicular line. The more he scrutinised, the more anxious was he to obtain specimens, and he determined to blast the rock. Being prepared with a couple of short crowbars and a flask of gunpowder, he fixed upon a corner, which appeared more assailable than the rest, and commenced his laborious occupation.

"Can I assist you, Mr. Macallan?" inquired Prose.

## THE KING'S OWN

"You can indeed, Mr. Prose. Now, observe; continue driving the end of the crowbar straight into this hole until you have made it about nine or ten inches deep; that will be sufficient. I will make another on the other side."

Prose commenced his labour, and for a few minutes worked with due emphasis; but he soon found out that he had volunteered to a most fatiguing task. He stopped at last for want of breath.

"Well, Mr. Prose," inquired the doctor, from the other side of the rock, observing that he had ceased from his labour, "how do you get on?"

"I wish to Heaven I had never got off," muttered Prose, "for this is worse than the elephant."

But the doctor was an enthusiast, a description of person who never tires, and he judged of others by himself.

"How far have you got now, Mr. Prose?"

"Oh, I think I have got an inch and a half good," answered Prose, quite exhausted.

"No more!" exclaimed Macallan; "why, you must work harder, or we never shall blast it."

"I have been *blasting* it in my heart," thought Prose, "for these last ten minutes," and he resumed his labour.

"You know nothing of mineralogy?" inquired the doctor, after a silence of a few minutes.

"This is my first lesson, doctor," answered Prose, out loud; and muttering in continuation, "I do declare it shall be the last."

"It's a very amusing study," continued Macallan; "but like most others, rather dry at first."

"Anything but dry," thought Prose, wiping his face with his handkerchief.

"I shall be happy to give you any information in my power," said Macallan; "but you must be attentive—nothing is to be obtained without labour."

"I'm sure mineralogy is not," retorted Prose, throwing down his crowbar from exhaustion.

Fortunately for Prose, by the directions of the interpreter the baggage elephant who carried the tent, and the natives accompanying it, now halted opposite to the rock, on the side where Prose was; for the wish expressed by Macallan to remain there had been construed by the interpreter as a selection of

## THE KING'S OWN

the place where the refreshments should be prepared. One of the natives, perceiving what Prose was about when he threw away the crowbar, offered his assistance, which was readily accepted, and the labour was continued.

"Well, Mr. Prose, how do you get on now?"

"Oh! capitally."

"Don't you find it very warm?" continued Macallan, who stopped to wipe the streams of perspiration from his own face.

"Oh no," answered Prose, chuckling.

"Well, I do, I can assure you," answered the doctor, who, not wishing to show symptoms of flagging while Prose was working so hard, recommenced his labour.

Another quarter of an hour, and the doctor was quite exhausted; wishing for an excuse to leave off himself, he called again to Prose—

"An't you tired, Mr. Prose?"

"Not the least, doctor."

"Oh, but you must be—you had better rest yourself a little."

"Thank you, but I'm not the least tired."

Another five minutes.—"Well, Mr. Prose, I really give you great credit for your perseverance. Let me see how deep you are," said Macallan, who could find no other excuse for being the first to abandon his task.

But Prose, who was not exactly a fool, determined not to lose his credit with the doctor; pushing aside the native, he took the crowbar from him, and before the doctor had walked round, was again hard at work.

"Upon my honour I give you great credit," observed the panting Macallan, as he witnessed the effects of the labour.

"But," observed Prose, "why should we work this way when there are a parcel of black fellows doing nothing? Here, I say, you chap, come and punch here," continued he, pointing the crowbar to the native, who immediately resumed his labour. "You call another, Mr. Macallan, and make him work for you."

"Well thought of, Mr. Prose," answered the doctor, and another native being put in requisition, in less than an hour the rock was perforated to the depth required, without the least appearance of fatigue or even heat upon the skins of the temperate Hindoos. In the meantime the tent was erected the mats and carpets spread, the fires lighted, and the repast



## THE KING'S OWN

preparing by the cooks who were in attendance. The doctor, who was absorbed in his views, heeded it not, and had just finished the charging and priming of the rock when the cavalcade returned from their excursion.

"Well, doctor, how do you get on?" inquired Courtenay.

"Oh, I'm all ready, and you had better remove to a little distance, as I'm about to fire my trains."

"Fire your trains! Why, what have you been about?"

"I am going to blast the rock."

"The devil you are—then I'm off," cried Courtenay, who with Seymour retreated from the well-known effects of gunpowder.

The natives who accompanied them also retired, although not aware of the nature of the operation. The interpreter understood "gentlemen make fireworks," and reported accordingly.

The doctor lighted his matches and withdrew, followed by Prose, who forgot his limp upon this occasion. The mines exploded, splitting large fragments from the rock, and shaking it from its base.

"Capital!" exclaimed the doctor, who as soon as the smoke had cleared away ran up, and was in ecstasies at the variety and brilliancy of the specimens which were now exposed to his eager view.

But in his enthusiasm the doctor quite overlooked the mischief which he had occasioned. One large fragment had struck the tent to the ground; others had scattered the cooking utensils, with their contents, and wounded the unfortunate cooks; while the affrighted elephant had completed the demolition by trotting over the whole, his trunk raised high in the air, uttering shrill cries, and regardless of the admonitions of his conductor. All was confusion and dismay.

The natives when they witnessed the damage were astonished. A long consultation took place between them as to what the doctor meant; at last it was decided by the grave deputy that it was intended as a compliment to them—for all fireworks were compliments in that country. They therefore salaamed with great good-humour; but the English knew better, and commenced a violent attack on Macallan, who was still absorbed in collecting specimens, and quite unconscious of the mischief which he had created.

"You've not only destroyed our dinner," continued Courtenay, "but you've killed three cooks, and wounded seven more."

## THE KING'S OWN

"Is it possible!" cried Macallan with dismay, throwing away his specimens with as much haste as he had seized upon them, and running in the direction of the men reported to be hurt. Fortunately for his peace of mind Courtenay's list of killed was all invention, and the wounded were reduced to two, which the doctor conscientiously reported under the head of "slightly."

There was no help but to proceed to town, and wait until another repast could be provided. This was soon done, and the interpreter, with a double salaam, informed the doctor, that "if gentleman wish blow up another tent, deputy have one ready for him next day."

"Well, now, I do declare these people are very polite," observed Prose; "but I hope that if you do, doctor, you will not make me a party to it. I would never have punched so hard at that hole if I thought that it was to have blown up my own dinner."

"You're right, Mr. Prose," answered Courtenay. "The doctor did not treat us according to the Scriptures. We asked for bread, and he gave us a stone—rather annoying too, after a long ride. But, however, as the game is to come to us to-morrow, we had better be up early to receive it in due form—so good-night."

## CHAPTER XLIV

Now shall ye see  
Our Roman hunting.

SHAKSPEARE.

Never did I hear  
Such gallant chiding; for besides the groves,  
The skies, the fountains, ev'ry region near  
Seemed all one mutual cry. I never heard  
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder!

SHAKSPEARE.

AT an early hour, Courtenay and his companions started with their attendants for the scene of action. Several elephants, as well as horses, had been provided, that the officers might mount them when they arrived, and fire from their backs

## THE KING'S OWN

with more deliberate aim. In less than two hours they reached the spot which they had surveyed the day before. The game, which had been driven from jungle to jungle for many miles round, was now collected together in one large mass of underwood and low trees, three sides of which were surrounded by the natives, who had been employed in the service, and who had been joined by many hundreds from the town and neighbouring villages. As soon as the party arrived, those who were on horseback dismounted, took their stations upon the howdahs of the elephants, and collected at the corner of that side of the jungle at which the animals were to be driven out. The scene was one of the most animating and novel description. Forty or fifty of the superior classes of natives, mounted upon fiery Arabians, with their long, glittering boar-spears in their hands, and above one hundred on foot, armed with muskets, surrounded the elephants upon which the officers were stationed. The people who were waiting round the jungle, silent themselves, and busy in checking the noise and impatience of the dogs, held in leashes, whose deep baying was occasionally answered by a low growl from the outskirts of the wood, now received the order to advance. Shouts and yells, mixed with the barking of the dogs, were raised in deafening clamour on every side. The jungle, which covered a space of fifteen or twenty acres, and which had hitherto appeared but slightly tenanted, answered as if endued with life, by waving its boughs and rustling its bushes in every direction, although there was nothing to be seen.

As they advanced, beating with their long poles, and preserving a straight and compact line, through which nothing could escape, so did the jungle before them increase its motion ; and soon the yells of thousands of men were answered by the roars and cries of thousands of brute animals. It was not, however, until the game had been driven so near to the end of the jungle at which the hunters were stationed, and until they were huddled together so close that it could no longer contain them, that they unwillingly abandoned it. The most timorous, the rabbit and the hare, and all the smaller tribes, first broke cover, and were allowed to pass unnoticed ; but they were soon followed by the whole mass, who, as if by agreement among themselves, had determined at once to decide their fate.

## THE KING'S OWN

Crowded in incongruous heaps, without any distinction of species or of habits, now poured out the various denizens of the woods — deer in every variety, locking their horns in their wild confusion; the fierce wild-boars, bristling in their rage; the bounding leopards; the swift antelope, of every species; the savage panthers; jackals, and foxes, and all the screaming and shrieking infinities of the monkey tribe. Occasionally amongst the dense mass could be perceived the huge boa-constrictor, rolling in convolutions — now looking back with fiery eyes upon his pursuers, now precipitating his flight; while the air was thronged with its winged tenants, wildly screaming, and occasionally dropping down dead with fear. To crown the whole, high in the expanse a multitude of vultures appeared, almost stationary on the wing, waiting for their share of the anticipated slaughter. And as the beasts threw down and rolled over each other in their mad career, you might have fancied, from the universal terror which prevailed, that it was a day of judgment to which the inhabitants had been summoned.

It was not a day of mercy. The slaughter commenced; shot after shot laid them in the dust, while the natives, on their Arabians, charged with their spears into the thickest of the crowd, regardless of the risk which they encountered from the muskets of other parties. The baying of the large dogs, who tore down their victims, the din occasionally increased by the contention and growls of the assailed, the yells of the natives, and the shrill cries of the elephants, raised in obedience to their conductors to keep the more ferocious animals at a distance, formed a scene to which no pen can do justice. In a few minutes all was over; those who had escaped were once more hid, panting, in the neighbouring jungles, while those who had fallen covered the ground, in every direction, and in every variety.

"Very fine tiger-hunt, sar," observed the interpreter to Courtenay, with exultation.

"Very fine indeed. Seymour, this is something like a battue. What would some of your English sportsmen have given to have been here? But, interpreter, I don't see any tigers."

"Great tigers? No, sar, no great tiger in this country. Call dis tiger," said the man, pointing with his finger to a prostrate leopard.

## THE KING'S OWN

Such is the case—the regal Bengal tiger, as well as his rival the lion, admits of no copartnership in his demesnes. On the banks of the impetuous rivers of India he ranges alone the jungles which supply his wants, and permits them not to be poached by inferior sportsmen. Basking his length in the sun, and playing about his graceful tail, he prohibits the intrusion of the panther or the leopard. His majestic compeer seems to have entered into an agreement with him, that they shall not interfere with each other's manorial rights, and where you find the royal tiger, you need not dread the presence of the lion. Each has established his dominion where it has pleased him, both respecting each other, and leaving the rest of the world to be preyed upon by their inferiors.

"Well, Prose, how many did you kill?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, Seymour, I never fired my musket. I was so astonished and so frightened that I could not; I never believed that there were so many beasts in the whole universe."

"I am convinced," observed Macallan, "that I saw an animal hitherto undescribed—I fired at it, but an antelope bounded by as I pulled my trigger, and received the ball—I never regretted anything so much in my life. Did you see it?"

"I saw a number of most indescribable animals," replied Courtenay; "but let us descend and walk over the field of slaughter."

The party dismounted, and for some time amused themselves with examining the variety of the slain. The deer and antelopes were the most plentiful; but on enumeration, nine panthers and leopards, and fifteen wild boars, headed the list. Prose and Seymour were walking side by side, when they perceived a monkey sitting on the ground, with a most pitiful face; it was of a small variety, with a long tail; it made no effort to escape as they approached it, but, on the contrary, appeared to court their notice, by looking at them with a melancholy air, and uttering loud cries as if in pain.

"Poor little fellow," said Seymour, apostrophising the animal, "it looks as if it were a rational being. Where are you hurt?"

The monkey, as if it were a rational being, looked down at one of his hind legs, and put his finger into the wound where the ball had entered.

## THE KING'S OWN

"Well, now, I do declare," said Prose, "but the poor beast understands you."

Seymour examined the leg without any resistance on the part of the monkey, who continued to look first at the wound and then in their faces, as if to say, "Why did you do it?"

"Macallan, come here," ejaculated Seymour, "and see if you can assist this poor little fellow."

Macallan came up and examined the wound. "I think it will recover; the bone is not broken, and no vital part is touched. We'll bandage it up and take him home."

"How very like a human being it is," observed Courtenay; "it appears only to want speech—it's really excessively annoying."

"Rather mortifying to our pride, I grant," replied Macallan.

"That's exactly what I mean."

Seymour tore up his handkerchief for bandages, and the monkey was consigned to the care of a native. (*Par parenthèse*, it eventually recovered; and from the peculiarity of its history, and the request of Seymour, was allowed by Captain M—— to remain on board of the frigate, where it became a great favourite. *High Caste*, on the contrary, disappeared a few days after his reception, having been thrown overboard by some of the people that he had bitten, and Captain M—— made no inquiries after him. So much for the two monkeys.)

By this time the natives had collected the game, which was carried in procession before the officers—the leopards and panthers, which they skinned and rudely stuffed with grass in an incredibly short time, leading the procession, followed by the wild boars, deer, and antelopes, each carried between two men, slung under bamboos which rested on their shoulders. The procession having passed in review before them, continued its course to the town, followed by crowds of people who had come out to join the sport.

"Gentlemen like dine here?" inquired the interpreter; "soon make dinner ready, but no ab tent."

"Thanks to you, doctor, they won't trust us with another. I vote we dine here; for I am hungry enough to eat a buffalo, without anchovy sauce—eh, Mr. Prose? Let us dine under yon acacia on the little mount. There is a fine breeze blowing, and plenty of shade from the tree."

Courtenay's proposal was agreed to, and the interpreter



## THE KING'S OWN

gave the directions. He then told the doctor, that if Saib wished to see snake-man, he come now, and bring very fine snake.

The man made his appearance, holding in his hand a small earthen chatty, or pot, in which he had confined the snake, covered over with a linen rag. He exchanged a few sentences with the interpreter, who explained that "man not afraid of bite of snake, and if gentleman give him rupee, he let snake bite him—man eat herb, same as little beast that kill snake."

"Oh, that plant that the ichneumon resorts to when bitten," exclaimed Macallan. "This will be a most curious fact, and I must witness it. Interpreter, tell him that I will reward him handsomely."

"How does he catch the snakes?" inquired Seymour.

"Blow little pipe, sar," replied the interpreter, pointing to a small reed, perforated with five or six holes, suspended by a string to the man's neck; "snake like music."

He then proceeded to explain the manner of taking the snakes, which was effected by lying down close to the hole where the snake was, and by playing a few soft notes with the pipe. The snake, attracted by the sound, puts his head out of the hole, and is immediately firmly grasped by the neck, by which he is held until his fangs are extracted, by jerking them out with a piece of rag, held for him to bite at.

"Strange," observed Courtenay, "that snakes should be fond of music, and still stranger that people should have discovered it."

"And yet it has long been known—perhaps from time immemorial," answered Macallan. "The comparisons of Scripture are all derived from eastern scenery and eastern customs. Do you not recollect the words of the Psalmist, who compareth the wicked to the deaf adder, who 'will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely'?"

"I recollect it now," answered Courtenay; "from which I infer, that as snakes are not caught for nothing, they danced before King Solomon."

"Perhaps they did, or at least in his time."

The man carefully removed the cloth from the top of the chatty, and watching his opportunity, seized the snake by the neck, who immediately wound itself round his arm. Holding

## THE KING'S OWN

it in that position, he rapidly chewed leaves which he had wrapped in the cloth which encircled his loins. After having laid a heap of the masticated leaves near him, he swallowed a large quantity, and then applied the head of the snake to his left ear, which the animal immediately bit so as to draw blood. It was a cobra di capella of the largest size, being nearly six feet long. As soon as the snake had bitten him he replaced it in the chatty, and at the same time that he continued to swallow the leaves, rubbed the wounded part with some of the heap which he had masticated and laid down beside him.

There was a silence, and a degree of painful anxiety, on the part of the spectators during the process. The man appeared to be sick and giddy, and lay down, but gradually recovered, and making a low salaam, received his largess, handed the snake, in the chatty, to Macallan, and departed.

"A most curious fact—an excessively curious fact," observed the doctor, putting up his tablets, and a handful of the leaves, which he had taken the precaution to obtain.

"Now, gentlemen, dinner all ready," observed the interpreter.

The dinner had been spread out on the little mount pointed out by Courtenay. It rose isolated from the plain to the height of about thirty feet, with a steep and regular ascent on every side. The summit was flat, and in the centre the acacia waved its graceful and pendent flowers to the breeze, each moment altering the position of the bright spot of sunshine which pierced through its branches and reflected on the grass beneath. The party (consisting of the officers of the ship, the grave deputy, and his immediate suite, about fifteen in number), whose appetites were keen from their morning exercise and excitement, gladly hailed the summons, and seating themselves in a circle round the viands, which were spread under the tree, crossed their legs, after the Mahometan custom, and made a furious attack upon the provender.

Macallan, to secure his newly-acquired treasure, hung the chatty, by its string, upon one of the long thorns of the acacia, and then took his seat with the rest. Ample justice having been done to what had been placed before them, mirth and good-humour prevailed. Courtenay had just persuaded the grave old deputy to break through the precepts of his religion and partake of the forbidden cup, in the shape of a tumbler of

## THE KING'S OWN

Madeira, when the chatty, which the doctor had suspended aloft, by the constant waving of the tree to the wind, worked off the thorn, and falling down in the very centre of the circle, smashed into atoms, and the cobra di capella met their gaze, reared upon the very tip of his tail, his hood expanded to the utmost in his wrath, hissing horribly, and darting out his forked tongue—wavering, among the many, upon whom first to dart.

Never was a convivial party so suddenly dispersed. For one, and but one, moment they were all paralysed; no one attempted to get up and run away—then, as if by a simultaneous thought, they all threw themselves back, tossing their heels over their heads, and continuing their eccentric career. Mussulmen and Europeans all tumbled backwards, heels over heads, down the descent, diverging in every point of the compass, until they reached their respective situations at the bottom of the mount, while the cobra di capella still remained in his menacing attitude, as if satisfied with the universal homage paid to his dreadful powers.

They all recovered their legs (as they had gained the bottom of the hill) about the same time. Courtenay and Seymour, now that the danger was over, were convulsed with laughter—Macallan in amazement—Prose, with his eyes starting out of his head, uttering his usual “I do declare”—the deputy as grave as ever—and the remainder, fortunately, more frightened than they were hurt.

One of the native servants put an end to the scene by reascending the hill with a long bamboo, with which he struck the animal to the ground, and subsequently despatched him. By this time all had recovered from their alarm, and in a few minutes their seats were resumed. The doctor, who was vexed at the loss of his snake, commenced an examination of the body, and was still more mortified to find that the wily Hindoo had deceived him, the venomous fangs having been already extracted.

“It is positively a fact,” observed he to Courtenay, in ill-humour, “he has cheated me.”

“A most curious fact,” replied Courtenay, shrugging up his shoulders, and lowering the corners of his mouth. “Now, Macallan, what’s the use of your memoranda about time of biting, appearance of patient, &c.? Allow, for once, that there are some things which are ‘excessively annoying.’”

## THE KING'S OWN

The party soon after remounted, and proceeded to the town. The next morning they repaired on board, and the queen having, at last, concocted the letter of thanks, the *Aspasia* weighed and proceeded to Bombay.

## CHAPTER XLV

An you like a *ready knave*, here is one of most approved convenience : he will cheat you, moreover, to your heart's content. If you believe me not, try him.—*The Colony*, 1635.

THE *Aspasia* continued her passage with light but favourable winds. As the ship made but little progress, Captain M—— stood into Goa Bay, as he passed by that relic of former grandeur and prosperity—alas ! like the people who raised it, how fallen from its “high estate.” The town still covers the same vast extent of ground ; the churches still rear their heads above the other buildings in their beautiful proportions ; the Palace of the Inquisition still lours upon you in its fanatical gloom and massive iron bars. But where is the wealth, the genius, the enterprise, the courage, and religious enthusiasm which raised these majestic piles ? A scanty population of mixed Hindoo and Portuguese blood, or of half-converted Indians, are the sole occupiers of this once splendid city of the East. Read the history of the Moors when in Spain, their chivalry and their courage, their learning and advancement in the arts—and now view their degraded posterity on the African coast. Reflect upon the energy and perseverance of the Spaniards at the time when they drove out those conquerors of their country after a struggle of so many years, their subsequent discovery and possession of a western world—and behold them now. Turn to the Portuguese, who, setting an example of perseverance and activity to the nations of Europe, in vessels in which we should now think it almost insanity to make the attempt, forced their passage round the Stormy Cape, undeterred by disasters or by death, and grasped the empire of the East—what are they in the scale of nations now ?

How rapid these transitions ! Two hundred years have scarcely rolled away—other nations, with the fabrics they have

## THE KING'S OWN

raised, have been precipitated to the dust; but they have departed, full of years, and men and things have run their race together. But here, the last in all their splendour, while the energies of the former have decayed, remain; and where have we a more melancholy picture of humanity, either in an individual or in a nation, than when we survey the body that has outlived the mind?

Since the world began, history is but the narrative of kingdoms and states progressing to maturity or decay. Man himself is but an epitome of the nations of men. In youth, all energy; in prime of life, all enterprise and vigour; in senility, all weakness and second childhood. Then, England, learn thy fate from the unerring page of time. Sooner or later, it shall arrive that thou shalt be tributary to some nation hitherto, I trust, unborn; and thy degenerate sons shall read that liberty was once the watchword of the isle, and yet not even feel a longing to be free.

As the *Aspasia* lay nearly becalmed at the entrance of the harbour, a small boat, rowed by two men, pulled towards her, and the occupant of the stern-sheets, as he came alongside, stated in bad English that he brought "present for captain," and was allowed to come up the side by the first lieutenant, who was on deck. He was a native friar, and disgusting as the dress is when worn by an European in a northern clime, it appeared still more so enveloping a black under the torrid zone. He carried a little covered basket in his hand, and stated that he had been sent by the superior of the convent, which he pointed to, on the headland at the mouth of the harbour. The first lieutenant went down into the cabin and reported to the captain.

"A present!" observed Captain M——; "I hope it is not a monkey—'Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.'"

The first lieutenant, who had forgotten his Latin, made no answer, but returned on deck, where he was shortly after followed by Captain M——.

The sable votary of St. Francis made his bow, and opening the lid of his basket, pulled out a cabbage with a long stalk and four or five flagging leaves, but no heart to it. "Superior send present to Inglez capitown." And having laid it carefully on the carronade slide, fumbled in his pocket for some time, and eventually produced a dirty sheet of paper, on

## THE KING'S OWN

which, written in execrable English, was a petition to assist the wants of the convent.

"I expected as much," observed Captain M——, smiling, as he ran over the ridiculous wording of the petition. "Desire the purser's steward to get up a bag of biscuit, and put into the boat."

The bread was handed on the gangway, when the friar, observing it, went up to the captain, and said, "Superior like rum, sar; suppose you no rum, teng like money."

"Perhaps he may," replied Captain M——; "but it is against my rules to give the first, and if I recollect right, against those of your order to receive the second."

Finding that nothing more was to be obtained, the friar was about to depart, when perceiving the cabbage lying unnoticed where he had deposited it, he observed, "Capitown, non quer cabbage—not want?"

"Not particularly," replied Captain M——, surveying it with rather a contemptuous smile.

"Then take it ashore, plant it again—do for 'nother ship;" and he replaced the present in his basket, made his bow, and departed.

Reader; cabbages are scarce articles in India. I have seen them at Pondicherry, growing in flower-pots, as curious exotics.

Two days afterwards the *Aspasia* came to an anchor at Bombay, and having saluted the admiral, Captain M—— went on shore to pay his respects in person. The ship was soon crowded with a variety of people, who came off to solicit the washing, &c., of the officers. The gun-room officers had just finished their dinner, and the cloth had been removed, when our friend Billy Pitts entered, introducing a slim personage, attired in a robe of spotless white, with the dark turban peculiar to the Parsees, and bringing in his hand a small basket of fruit.

"Massa Courtenay, here mulatta fellow want to speak to officers. Call himself Dubash—look in dictionary, and no such word in English language."

"It means a washerman, I suppose," observed Price.

"No, sir," answered the man for himself, with a graceful bow, "not a washerman, but at same time get all your clothes washed. Dubash go to market, supply gentlemen with everything they want—run everywhere for them—bring off meat



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and fish, and everything else—everybody have dubash here—I dubash to all the ships come here—got very good certificate, sir,” continued the Parsee, drawing a thin book from his vest, and presenting it to Courtenay with a low bow.

“Well, Mr. Dubash, let us see what your character may be,” said Courtenay, opening the book.

“Yes, sir, you please to read them, and I go speak to young gentlemen before other dubash come on board; I bring gentlemen little fruit,” and laying the basket respectfully on the table, with another low salaam the man quitted the gun-room.

Courtenay read for a minute, and then burst into a fit of laughter. “Very good certificates, indeed,” observed he; “only hear—

“1st.—‘This is to certify that Hommajee Baba served the gun-room mess of his Majesty’s ship *Flora*, and cheated us most damnably.

(Signed)      “‘PETER HICKS, 1st Lieut.  
“‘JONAS SMITH, Purser.’

“2nd.—‘Hommajee Baba served me as dubash during my stay in this port. He is a useful fellow, but a great scoundrel. I gave him one half of his bill, and he was perfectly satisfied. I recommend others to do the same.

(Signed)      “‘ANDREW THOMPSON,  
Company’s ship *Clio*.’

“3rd.—‘I perfectly agree with the above remarks; but as all the other dubashes are as great thieves, and not half so intelligent, I conscientiously recommend Hommajee Baba.

(Signed)      “‘PETER PHILLIPS,  
Captain Honbl. Company’s cruiser *Vestal*.’

“4th.—‘Of all the scoundrels that I ever had to deal with in this most rascally quarter of a most knavish world, Hommajee Baba is the greatest. Never give him any money, as he will find it; but when you go away, pay him one-third of his bill, and you will still have paid him too much.

(Signed)      “‘BILLY HELFLAME,  
Captain H.M.S. *Spitfire*.’”

About a dozen pages of the book were filled with certificates to the above effect, which the dubash, although he

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spoke English fluently, not being able to read, considered, as he had been informed at the time, to be decidedly in his favour. They were so far valuable, that they put new-comers upon their guard, and prevented much extortion on the part of the said Hommajee.

When the laughter had to a degree subsided, Billy Pitts was the first to exclaim, "D—n black villain—I think so, when he come to me ; not like cut of um jib——"

"'Who steals my purse, steals trash,'" spouted Price.

"'Cause you never have money, Mr. Price," cried Billy, interrupting him.

"Silence, sir—'But he who filches from me my good name, robs me of that—of that——'"

"Rob you of what, sar ?"

"Silence, sir," again cried Price—" 'robs me of that'—what is it?—that d—d black thief has put it out of my head——"

"I not the thief, sar—Massa Price, you always forget end of your story."

"I'll make an end of you directly, sir, if you're not off."

"No! don't kill Billy," observed Courtenay; "it's bad enough to have murdered Shakspeare. Well, but now, it's my opinion that we ought to employ this fellow, and take the advice that has been given to us in this book."

Courtenay's proposal was assented to, and on his return Hommajee Baba was installed in office.

The next morning, Seymour, Courtenay, and Macallan went on shore to meet an old acquaintance of the latter, who had called upon him on his arrival. By his advice they left the ship before the sun had risen, that they might be enabled to walk about, and view the town and its environs, without being incommoded by the heat. They reached the long plain close to the sea, upon which the admiral and many others, according to the custom of the English inhabitants, were residing in capacious tents ; not such tents as have been seen in England, but impervious to the heat and rain, covering a large extent of ground, divided into several apartments, and furnished like any other residence. The broad expanse of ocean which met their view was unruffled, and the beach was lined with hundreds, standing on their carpets spread upon the sand, with their faces turned towards the east. As the sun rose in splendour above the horizon, they all pros-

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trated themselves in mute adoration, and continued in that position until his disc had cleared the water's edge; they then rose, and throwing a few flowers into the rippling wave, folded up their carpets and departed.

"Who are those people, and of what religion?" demanded Seymour.

"They are Parsees, a remnant of the ancient Persians—the Guebres, or worshippers of fire. As you have witnessed, they also adore the sun. They came here long since to enjoy their tenets, free from persecution. They are the most intelligent race that we have. Many of them were princes in their own country, and are now men of unbounded wealth. They have their temples here, in which the sacred fire is never permitted to go out. If by any chance or negligence it should become extinct, it must be relighted from heaven alone. We have no lightning here, and they send to Calcutta, where there is plenty at the change of the monsoon, and bring it round with great ceremony."

"In other points, are their customs different from the Hindoos?"

"Yes; their women are not so immured; you will meet plenty of them when you return to town. They are easily distinguished by their fair complexions, and the large thin gold rings, with three or four pearls strung upon them, worn in a hole perforated through the nostril, and hanging below their mouths."

"And what are those immense towers on the other side of the bay?"

"They were built by the Parsees, as depositories for the dead; on the summit is a wide iron grating, upon which the bodies are laid to be devoured by the birds of prey; when stripped, the bones fall through the iron bars into the receptacle below. They never bury their dead. But breakfast must be ready, so we had better return. You have much to see here. The caves of Elephanta and Canara are well worthy of your attention, and I shall be happy to attend you when you feel inclined to pay a visit to them."

They did not fail to profit by the offer, and before the week had passed away they had witnessed those splendid monuments of superstition and idolatry. The *Aspasia* received her orders, and Homnaje Baba, being paid the due proportion

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of his bill, received his certificate from Courtenay in the usual form, and so far from being affronted, requested the honour of being again employed in their services if ever they should return to Bombay.

### CHAPTER XLVI

These are not foes  
With whom it would be safe to strive in honour.  
They will repay your magnanimity,  
Assassin-like, with secret stabs.

ANON.

THE strength of the monsoon had blown over, and Captain M——, in pursuance of his orders, beat across the Bay of Bengal for the Straits of Sumatra, where he expected to fall in with some of the enemy's privateers, who obtained their supplies of water in that direction. After cruising for six weeks without success, they fell in with an armed English vessel, who informed them that she had been chased by a large pirate proa, and had narrowly escaped—acquainting Captain M—— with the islet from which she had sallied out in pursuit of them, and to which she had in all probability returned.

Captain M——, naturally anxious to scour the seas of these cruel marauders, who showed no quarter to those who had the misfortune to fall into their hands, determined to proceed in quest of this vessel; and after a week's unsuccessful reconnoitre of the various islets which cover the seas in that quarter, one morning discovered her from the masthead on his weather beam, sailing and rowing down towards the frigate to ascertain whether she was a vessel that she might venture to attack.

The *Aspasia* was disguised as much as possible, and the pirates were induced to approach within a distance of two miles, when, perceiving their mistake, they lowered their sails, and turning the head of their vessel in the opposite direction, pulled away from the frigate right in the wind's eye. The breeze freshened, and all possible sail was crowded on the *Aspasia* to overtake them, and although at the close of the day they had not neared her much, the bright moon enabled them to keep the vessel in view during the night.

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Early in the morning (the crew being probably exhausted from their incessant labour) she kept away for some islets broad upon the *Aspasia's* weather bow, and came to an anchor in a small cove between the rocks, which sheltered her from the guns of the frigate.

Captain M—— considered it his duty at all risks to destroy the proa; and hoisting out the boats, he gave the command to his first lieutenant, with strict injunctions how to deal with such treacherous and ferocious enemies. The launch was under repair at the time, and could not be employed; but the barge, pinnace, and two cutters were considered fully adequate to the service. Courtenay was second in command, in the pinnace; Seymour had charge of one cutter; and at his own particular request, Prose was entrusted with the other.

"I do declare, I think that I should like to go," observed Prose, when he first heard that the vessel was to be cut out.

"Why, you ought, Prose," replied Seymour; "you have never been on service yet."

"No; and you and I are the only two passed midshipmen in the ship." (Seymour and Prose had both passed their examination when the *Aspasia* was at Bombay.) "I think that I have a right to one of the boats."

So thought the first lieutenant when he made his application, and he obtained the command accordingly.

The boats shoved off as soon as the men had swallowed their breakfasts, and in less than an hour were but a short distance from the proa, which proved to be one of the largest size. A discharge of langrage from one of the two long brass guns mounted on her prow flew amongst the boats, without taking effect. A second discharge was more destructive, three of the men in the boat which Prose commanded being struck down bleeding under the thwarts, the oars, which they had not relinquished their hold of when they fell, being thrown high up in air.

"Halloa! I say—all catching crabs together!" cried Prose.

"Caught something worse than a crab, sir," replied the coxswain. "Wilson, are you much hurt?"

"The rascals have let daylight in, I'm afraid," answered the man faintly.

"Well, I do declare I'd no idea the poor fellows were wounded. Coxswain, take one of the oars, and I'll steer the

## THE KING'S OWN

boat, or we shall never get alongside. I say, Mr. Jolly, can't you pull?"

"Yes, sir, upon a pinch," answered the marine whom he addressed, laying his musket on the stern-sheets, and taking one of the unmanned oars.

"Well, there now, give way."

But the delay occasioned by this mishap had left the cutter far astern of the other boats, who, paying no attention to her, had pulled alongside and boarded the vessel. The conflict was short, from the superior numbers of the English and the little difficulty in getting on board of a vessel with so low a gunwale. By the time that Prose came alongside in the cutter, the pirates were either killed or had been driven below. Prose jumped on the gunwale, flourishing his cutlass—from the gunwale he sprung on the deck, which was not composed of planks, as in vessels in general, but of long bamboos, running fore and aft, and lashed together with rattans; and as Prose descended upon the rounded surface, which happened where he alighted to be slippery with blood, his feet were thrown up, and he came down on the deck in a sitting posture.

"Capital jump, Mr. Prose," cried Courtenay; "but you have arrived too late to shed your blood in your country's cause—very annoying, an't it?"

"O Lord!—O Lord!—I do declare—oh—oh—oh!" roared Prose, attempting to recover his feet, and then falling down again.

"Good heavens, what's the matter, Prose?" cried Seymour, running to his assistance.

"O Lord!—O Lord!—another!—oh!" again cried Prose, making a half-spring from the deck, from which he was now raised by Seymour, who again inquired what was the matter. Prose could not speak—he pointed his hand behind him, and his head fell upon Seymour's shoulder.

"He's wounded, sir," observed one of the men who had joined Seymour, pointing to the blood which ran from the trousers of Prose in a little rivulet. "Be quick, Mr. Seymour, and get on the gunwale, or they'll have you too." The fact was, that the deck being composed of bamboos, as already described, one of the pirates below had passed his creese through the spaces between them into Prose's body when he came down on deck in a sitting posture, and had repeated



## THE KING'S OWN

the blow when he failed to recover his feet after the first wound.

One of the seamen who had not provided himself with shoes now received a severe wound ; and after Prose had been handed into one of the boats, a consultation was held as to the most eligible method of proceeding.

It was soon decided that it would be the extreme of folly to attack such desperate people below, where they would have a great advantage with their creeses over the cutlasses of the seamen ; and as there appeared no chance of inducing them to come up, it was determined to cut the cables and tow the vessel alongside of the frigate, who could sink her with a broadside.

The cables were cut, and a few men being left on board to guard the hatchways, the boats commenced towing out ; but scarcely had they got way on her when, to their astonishment, a thick smoke was followed by the flames bursting out in every direction, consuming all on board with a rapidity that seemed incredible. From the deck the fire mounted to the rigging, thence to the masts and sails ; and before the boats could be backed astern to take them out, those who had been left were forced to leap into the sea to save themselves from the devouring element. The pirates had themselves set fire to the vessel. Most of them remained below, submitting to suffocation with sullen indifference. Some few, in the agony of combustion, were perceived through the smoke to leap overboard, and seek in preference a less painful death. The boats laid upon their oars, and witnessed the scene in silence and astonishment.

"Desperate and determined to the last," observed the first lieutenant.

In a very few minutes the proa, whose fabric was of the slightest materials, filled and went down. The last column of smoke, divided from her by the water, ascended in the air as she sank down below, and nought remained but a few burnt fragments of bamboo, which lay floating on the wave. A few seconds after the vessel had disappeared one of the pirates rose to the surface.

"There is a man alive yet," observed Courtenay. "Let us save him if we can."

The boat, by his directions, pulled a few strokes of the oars, and having rather too much way, shot ahead, so as to bring the man close to the counter of the boat. Courtenay leaned over

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the gunwale to haul him in ; the malignant wretch grasped him by the collar with his left hand, and with his right darted his creese into Courtenay's breast ; then, as if satisfied, with an air of mingled defiance and derision, immediately sank under the bottom of the pinnace, and was seen no more.

"Ungrateful viper !" murmured Courtenay, as he fell into the arms of his men.

The boats hastened back to the frigate. They had but few men hurt, except those mentioned in our narrative ; but the wounds of Courtenay and of Prose were dangerous. The creeses of the pirates had been steeped in the juice of the pineapple, which, when fresh applied, is considered as a deadly poison. The *Aspasia* soon afterwards anchored in Madras Roads, and a removal to a more invigorating clime was pronounced essential to the recovery of the two officers. Courtenay and Prose were invalided and sent home in an East Indiaman, but it was many months before they were in a state of convalescence. Captain M—— gave an acting order as lieutenant to Seymour, and when he joined the admiral, expressed himself so warmly in his behalf, that it was not superseded ; and our hero now walked the quarter-deck as third lieutenant of H.M.'s ship *Aspasia*.

If the reader is not by this time tired of India, I am. To narrate all that occurred would far exceed the limits of this work. I shall therefore confine myself to stating that, after three years, Captain M—— quitted the country, having during his stay gained much in reputation, but lost more in constitution. When we return to the frigate, she will be well advanced on her passage home.

## CHAPTER XLVII

When souls which should agree to will the same-  
To have one common object for their wishes,  
Look diff'rent ways, regardless of each other,  
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues !

ROWE.

**BUT** we must return to England, or we shall lose sight of the Rainscourt family, in which much that is interesting has occurred since our hero's absence in the East.

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Mr. Rainscourt made occasional visits to the Hall with the hope of inducing his wife to break through her resolution, and once more to reside with him under the same roof; but in this he could not succeed; for although Mrs. Rainscourt received him with kindness and urbanity, she was too well aware, by information received from many quarters, of the life of excess which he indulged in, ever again to trust her happiness in his keeping. Nevertheless, pursuing his point with an obstinacy that seemed surprising, Rainscourt always was to be found at the watering-place to which Mrs. Rainscourt might remove for change of scene; and for nearly five years from the time when he first paid a visit to his once neglected wife, did he continue to press his suit. The fact was, that so far from tiring, his anxiety to effect the reunion was constantly on the increase, from the general admiration which was bestowed upon Emily when she made her appearance in public; and Rainscourt felt that his house would be more resorted to, and his company be more courted, if he could have under his immediate protection one who had beauty sufficient to satisfy the most fastidious, and a certainty of ultimate wealth exceeding the views of the most interested.

It was two years or more after the departure of Seymour, that Mrs. Rainscourt and Emily determined upon passing the autumnal months at Cheltenham, accompanied by the M<sup>rs</sup> Elvinas. A few days after their arrival, Mr. Rainscourt made his appearance. He was now determined, if possible, to bring his suit to an issue. Some months back he had formed the plan which he thought most likely to succeed. This was to repair and refurnish the castle in Galway, and persuade Mrs. Rainscourt to pass a few weeks there, when he hoped that, having her in a more isolated position, she might be induced to accede to his wishes. Workmen had been employed for some time repairing the exterior of the ancient pile; the interior had been embellished under the guidance of a man of taste, and without any regard to expense. Splendid furniture had already been forwarded from London; so that Mr. Rainscourt's agent had written to him that in a few weeks the castle would be ready for his reception.

Upon his arrival at Cheltenham, Mr. Rainscourt astonished everybody by his splendid equipage. His carriages, his stud, and the whole of his establishment were quite unique. On

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the other hand, Mrs. Rainscourt and her daughter were equally objects of curiosity, not likely to pass unnoticed in such a place as Cheltenham, where people have nothing else to do but talk scandal and to drink salt water as a punishment.

The arrival of a pretty heiress increased very much the flow of bile in the young ladies, and in their mammas, who did not bring them to Cheltenham merely to drink the waters. The gentlemen, moreover, did not admire being so totally eclipsed by Mr. Rainscourt, who rendered insignificant what, previous to his appearance, had been considered "to be quite the thing." The ladies would talk of nothing but Mr. Rainscourt and his equipage—and such a handsome man, too. But on the whole, the females were the most annoyed, as there threatened to be a stagnation in the market until this said heiress was disposed of. Gentlemen who had been attentive more than a week, who had been asked twice to dinner, and who had been considered to have nibbled a sufficient time to ensure their eventually taking the bait, had darted in full liberty in the direction of the great heiress. Young ladies who were acknowledged to have the most attractions, pecuniary or personal, who simpered and smiled to twenty young philanderers, as they took their morning glass, now poured down their lukewarm solution in indignant solitude if Mrs. Rainscourt and her daughter made their appearance on the promenade. Real cases of bile became common; and the fair sex, in despair, although they did not, as they were evidently requested by the conduct of the gentlemen, "to a nunnery go," to preserve their complexions, were necessitated to repair to the pump.

"Don't you think that Miss Rainscourt's nose is rather too straight?" asked a young lady, with one on her own face that had a strong tendency towards the pug

"Indeed, I do not," replied a light-hearted Irish girl, "although she has put ours out of joint, as they call it. I only wish I'd her face or her fortune—either the one or the other—and I wouldn't be coming to Cheltenham after a husband—the gentlemen should trot over to Ireland."

"How very odd that Mr. and Mrs. Rainscourt should not live together—such good friends as they seem to be."

"Oh, I know the reason of that; I was told it yesterday by Lady Wagtail. It was a runaway match, and they

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happened to be related within the canonical law—they are both Roman Catholics—and the Pope found it out, and ordered them to be separated, upon pain of excommunication.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes, and Mr. Rainscourt is waiting for a licence from the Conclave—a dispensation, they call it. They say it is expected from Rome next post, and then they can be united again immediately.”

“What beautiful horses Mr. Rainscourt drives!”

“Yes, that curricule, with the greys and the outriders, is quite superb. He always drives through the turnpike, I observe.”

“To be sure he does. Why, they say that he has £40,000 a year.”

“And the whole is entailed upon his daughter.”

“Every farthing of it.”

“And who are those M’Elvinas?—What an odd name!”

“Oh, I can tell you. Mrs. Fitzpatrick says that he is of a very ancient Irish family—they are very rich. Mr. M’Elvina made his fortune in India by a speculation in opium, and his wife was the only daughter of a stockbroker in the city, who died worth a plum.”

“No. 4—a little warm, if you please, Mrs. Bishop.”

“Yes, miss.”

About a fortnight after his arrival, Rainscourt received the intelligence from his agent that everything was complete at the castle, and he determined to go over himself to examine it previous to communicating his interested act of gallantry to his wife. He proposed to M’Elvina, with whom he was on very friendly terms, to accompany him, and M’Elvina was decided in accepting the offer in consequence of Mr. Rainscourt’s having informed him that a large property, contiguous to his own, which had almost from time immemorial been in possession of the M’Elvina family, was now for sale, the last possessor having gambled the whole of it away.

“It may be worth your while,” continued he, “if you are inclined to possess landed property, to look at it; as my agent informs me that it will be disposed of very cheap, and will give you good interest for your money.”

M’Elvina had long wished to live in Ireland, from which country he derived his descent, and he could not but feel

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that some untoward recognition might possibly take place in such a place of numerous resort as Cheltenham, by which some of the passages in his early career might be exposed. This appeared to be a chance which might not again present itself, and he gladly consented to accompany Rainscourt in his excursion. After an absence of three weeks they returned. The castle had been fitted out in a style of lavish expenditure and taste, and Rainscourt could find little to improve or add. The property which M'Elvina went over to examine, suited him both in price and in situation; and having consulted his wife, who cordially acquiesced in his view, he wrote to Mr. Rainscourt's agent, requesting him to conclude the purchase.

Rainscourt now determined upon making his last effort for a resumption of marital rights. Having introduced the conversation by stating in minute detail the alterations and improvements which he had made at the castle, he then informed Mrs. Rainscourt that he had been to that expense in the hope that she would take possession of it for the remainder of the autumn.

"If," said he, "you knew the pleasure it would give me once more to see you surrounded with every luxury, in the place where we formerly resided in poverty—if you knew the joy which your presence would diffuse among your affectionate tenants, and the anxiety with which they are expecting your appearance—for I must acknowledge that I promised them that you should gladden them with your return—you would not refuse the request I have made."

But Rainscourt had not calculated well. If there was any spot of which the reminiscences were peculiarly painful to his wife, it was the castle in Galway. It was there that she had been treated with severity and contempt—it was there that she had been cruelly deserted by her husband when he was restored to affluence. With the bitter feelings attendant upon these recollections, Mrs. Rainscourt penetrated into the motives which had induced her husband to act, and the balance was more than ever against his cause. "If you have fitted up the castle to oblige me, Mr. Rainscourt, I return you my grateful thanks for your kindness and consideration; but I do not think that I could enter the castle with pleasure; there are so many more painful than agreeable remembrances



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connected with it, that I had rather decline going there—the more so as I consider it too secluded for Emily.”

“But not too secluded, Mrs. Rainscourt,” replied her husband, dropping on one knee, “for me to beseech pardon for my errors, and prove the sincerity of my repentance. Let me conjure you to allow it to be the scene of the renewal of my love and my admiration, as it unfortunately was of my folly and indifference.”

“Mr. Rainscourt, this interview must be decisive. Know, once for all, that such a reconciliation as you would desire never can or shall take place. Spare me the pain of recapitulation. It is enough to say that, once thrown from you, I cannot nor will not be resumed at your pleasure and fantasy. Although injured in the tenderest point, I forgive all that has passed, and shall be happy to receive you as a friend, in private as well as in public; but all attempts to obtain more will only meet with mortification and defeat. Rise, Mr. Rainscourt; take my hand in friendship—it is offered with cordiality; but if you again resume the subject of this meeting, I shall be forced to deny myself to you when you call.”

Rainscourt turned pale as he complied with her request. He had humiliated himself to no purpose. Mortified pride, mingled with rejected passion, formed a compound of deadly hate, which raged with fury against the late object of his desire. He commanded himself sufficiently to stammer out his regrets, and promised not again to introduce the subject; and lifting up the offered hand respectfully to his lips, he quitted her presence to meditate upon revenge.

The liberal settlements which he had made at the time of separation were too firmly secured to be withheld. To remove his daughter was the next idea which presented itself; but that could not be effected. Emily was of a resolute disposition, and would not consent to leave her mother; and an appeal to Chancery would show how unfit a person he was to have the responsible charge of a young woman. The night was passed in anxious meditation, and before the morning his plans were arranged. Nothing could be accomplished by force; he must therefore resort to address—he would be more than ever attentive, and trust to time and opportunity for the gratification of his revenge.

The parties continued at Cheltenham; and Mr. Rainscourt,

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following up his plan, made an avowal to his wife that he had now abandoned all hopes of success, and would not importune her any more. He only requested that she would receive him on those terms of intimacy in which consisted the present happiness of his life. Mrs. Rainscourt, who, although she had resolution sufficient to refuse him, felt great struggles in her own mind to decide the victory in favour of prudence, now leaned more favourably towards her husband than before. His assiduity for years—his indifference to money in fitting up the castle to please her—his humiliation when he kneeled to her—his subsequent humble expressions of regret—his polite attention, notwithstanding his repulse—and, added to all these, her gratified pride—all tended to soften her heart; and it is more than probable that in a few months she would have thought him sufficiently punished to have acceded to his wishes—but it was fated to be otherwise.

One morning Rainscourt called in his curricule, and as the horses stood at the door, champing their bits, and tossing their heads as they were held by the dismounted grooms, Mrs. Rainscourt, who was looking out of the window with her husband, and whose heart was fast warming towards him (for the tide once turned, the flow of affection is rapid), playfully observed, "Mr. Rainscourt, you often take Emily out with you in your curricule, but you have never offered to take me; I presume you think that I am too old."

"Indeed, Mrs. Rainscourt, if I had thought that you would have ventured, Emily would not so often have been seated at my side. If not too late, and you will pardon my negligence, oblige me by permitting me to drive you now."

"I don't know whether I ought to do so; but as married ladies have been from time immemorial forced from the field by their daughters, I believe I shall submit to the affront and accept your offer."

"I feel much flattered," replied he, "by your kind acquiescence; but you must allow me to desire my grooms to take these horses out, and put the others to, which are much quieter. It will be a delay of only a few minutes."

Mrs. Rainscourt smiled, and quitted the room to prepare for her excursion, while Rainscourt descended to the street door.

"William, drive to the stables; take these horses out, and put in the two others."

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"The others, sir," replied the man with surprise ; "what ! Smolensko and Pony-towsky ?"

"Yes—be smart, and bring them round as soon as you can."

"Why, sir, the two young 'uns have never been in together yet—Smolensko's but a rum customer when aside of a steady horse ; and as for Pony-towsky, he jibs just as bad as ever."

"Never mind—put them in and bring them round."

"Then I'd better tie up the dog, sir, for they can't neither of them abide him."

"Never mind—they must be accustomed to him ; so let the dog follow as usual. Be quick ;" and Rainscourt returned to the house.

"Sam, I can't for the life of me fancy what master's at to-day," said William, who had delivered his horse over to the other groom, and had mounted the curriele to drive it to the stable. "If he means to drive them two devils together, there's no road in England wide enough for him."

"I'm sure I can't tell," replied the other.

"No man in his senses would do it—unless, indeed, he's going to drive his wife."

"Why, hardly that, for they say he wants to marry her again."

"Marry his wife again !—no, no, Bill ; master's too wide awake for that."

The curriele reappeared at the door ; Rainscourt handed in his wife, and the horses set off, tightly reined by Rainscourt, and flying to and fro from the pole, so as to alarm Mrs. Rainscourt, who expressed a wish to alight.

"They are only fresh at first starting, my dear ; they will be quiet directly."

"Look there !" observed one of the promenaders ; "there's Rainscourt driving his wife in the curriele."

"Oh, then, the bull has arrived, you may depend upon it."

As they spoke, the dog made a spring at the horses' heads ; they plunged violently, and shortly after set off at full speed.

Rainscourt could not have stopped them if he had wished it ; but the fact was, that he had entered the curriele determined to hazard his own life rather than not gratify his revenge. All that was left for him was to guide them, and this he did so that the near wheel came in contact with a post. The horses, with the pole and broken traces, continued

## THE KING'S OWN

their rapid career, leaving Rainscourt, his wife, and the fragments of the vehicle in the road.

Rainscourt's plan had been successful. Although much contused by the fall, he was not severely injured. Mrs. Rainscourt, who had been thrown out with more violence over the head of her husband, was taken up with a fractured skull, and in a few minutes breathed her last.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

Oh, for a forty-parson power to chant  
Thy praise, Hypocrisy ! Oh, for a hymn  
Loud as the virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,  
Not practise !

BYRON.

Hypocrisy, the thriving'st calling,  
The only saint's-bell that rings all in :  
A gift that is not only able  
To domineer among the rabble,  
But by the law's empowered to rout,  
And awe the greatest that stand out.

*Hudibras.*

**A**LL-PERVADING essence, whose subtle spirit hath become a part component of everything this universe contains—power that presidest over nations and countries, kingdoms and cities, courts and palaces, and every human tenement, even to the lowly cot—leaven of the globe, that workest in the councils of its princes, in the reasonings of its senates, in the atmosphere of the court, in the traffic of the city, in the smiles of the enamoured youth, and in the blush of the responding maid—thou that clothest with awe the serjeant's coif and the bishop's robe—thou that assistest at our nurture, our education, and our marriage, our death, our funeral, and habiliments of woe—all hail !

“Chameleon spirit—at once contributing to the misery of our existence and adding to its fancied bliss—at once detested and a charm, to be eschewed and to be practised—that, with thy mystic veil, dimmest the bright beauty of virtue, and

## THE KING'S OWN

concealest the dark deformity of vice—imperishable, glorious, and immortal HUMBUG! Hail!

“Thee I invoke—and thus, with talismanic pen, commence my spells—and charge thee, in the name of courtiers’ bows, of great men’s promises, of bribery oaths, of woman’s smiles, and tears of residuary legatees—

“Appear!

“By thy favourite works—thy darling sinking fund—the blessings of free-trade—thy joint-stock companies—the dread of Popery—the liberality of East India Directors, and the sincerity of West India philanthropists—

“Descend!

“By the annual pageants—by the Lord Mayor’s show, and reform in Parliament—by Burdett’s democracy, and the first of April—by explanations, and calls for papers—by Bartlemy fair, and the minister’s budget—

“Come

“By lawyers’ consultations, and Chancery delay—public meetings, and public dinners—loyal toasts, and ‘three times three’—lady patronesses, and lords directors—and by the decoy subscription of the chair—

“Descend!

“By the *nolo episcopari* of the Bishops—

“Come!

“By newspaper puffs, and newspaper reports—by patent medicines, and portable dressing-cases, wine-merchant’s bottles, ne-plus-ultra corkscrews—H——t’s corn, C——tt’s maize, W——’s blacking, and W——’s champagne—

“Appear!

“By thy professional followers, the fashionable tailors, hair-dressers, boot-makers, milliners, jewellers—all the auctioneers, and all the bazaars—

“Come to my aid!

“By thy interested worshippers—by shuffling W——e, by Z—— M——y, Lawyer S——ns, W——m S——th, T——l B——n, Sir G——r M’G——r, and Dom M——l—

“Appear!

“By thy talented votaries—

“Descend!

“Still heedless!—Then by the living B——m, and the shade of C——g, come!

## THE KING'S OWN

"Rebellious and wayward spirit ! I tell thee, come thou must, whether thou art at a council to wage a war in which thousands shall perish, or upon the padding of a coat, by which, unpaid for, but one-ninth part of a man shall suffer—whether thou art forging the powerful artillery of woman against unarmed man, and directing the fire from her eye, which, like that of the Egyptian queen, shall lose an empire—or art just as busy in the adjustment of the bustle<sup>1</sup> of a lady's-maid—appear thou must. There is one potent spell, one powerful name, which shall force thee trembling to my presence.—Now—

"By all that is contemptible—

"By all his patriotism, his affection for the army and the navy—by his flow of eloquence, and his strength of argument—by the correctness of his statements, and the precision of his arithmetic—by his sum *tottle*, and by Joey H—e himself—

"Appear !"

*[Humbug descends, amidst a discharge of Promethean and copperplate thunder.]*

"'Tis well ! Now perch upon the tip, and guide my pen, and contrive that the wickedness and hypocrisy of the individual may be forgotten in the absurdity of the scene."

The grooms made no scruple, after the catastrophe, to state all that had passed between them and their master ; it was spread through Cheltenham with the usual rapidity of all scandal, in a place where people have nothing to do but to talk about each other. The only confutation which the report received, was the conduct of Mr. Rainscourt. He was positively inconsolable—he threw himself upon the remains, declaring that nothing should separate him from his dear—dear Clara. The honest old curate, who had attended Mrs. Rainscourt in her last moments, had great difficulty, with the assistance of the men-servants, in removing him to another chamber on the ensuing day. Some declared that he repented of his unkind behaviour, and that he was struck with remorse ; the females

<sup>1</sup> I am not certain whether I spell this modern invention correctly ; if not, I must plead ignorance. I have asked several ladies of my acquaintance, who declare that they never heard of such a thing, which, perhaps, the reader will agree with me is all humbug.



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observed, that men never knew the value of a wife until they lost her; others thought his grief was all humbug, although they acknowledged at the same time that they could not find out any interested motives to induce him to act such a part.

But when Mr. Rainscourt insisted that the heart of the deceased should be embalmed, and directed it to be enshrined in an urn of massive gold, then all Cheltenham began to think that he was sincere—at least all the ladies did; and the gentlemen, married or single, were either too wise or too polite to offer any negative remark when his conduct was pronounced to be a pattern for all husbands. Moreover, Mr. Potts, the curate, vouched for his sincerity, in consequence of the handsome gratuity which he had received for consigning Mrs. Rainscourt to the vault, and the liberal largess to the poor upon the same occasion. “How could any man prove his sincerity more?” thought Mr. Potts, who, blinded by gratitude, forgot that although in affliction our hearts are softened towards the miseries of others, on the other hand, we are quite as (if not more) liberal when intoxicated with good fortune.

Be it as it may, the conduct of Mr. Rainscourt was pronounced most exemplary. All hints and surmises of former variance were voted scandalous, and all Cheltenham talked of nothing but the dead Mrs. Rainscourt, the living Mr. Rainscourt, the heart, and the magnificent gold urn.

“Have you heard how poor Mr. Rainscourt is?” was the usual question at the pump, as the ladies congregated to pour down No. 3 or No. 4, in accordance with the directions of the medical humbugs.

“More resigned—they say he was seen walking after dark.”

“Was he, indeed? to the churchyard, of course. Poor dear man!”

“Miss Emily’s maid told my Abigail last night, that she looks quite beautiful in her mourning. But I suppose she will not come on the promenade again before she leaves Cheltenham.”

“She ought not,” replied a young lady who did not much approve of so handsome an heiress remaining at Cheltenham. “It will be very incorrect if she does; some one ought to tell her so.”

With the exception of Mr. Potts, no one had dared to break in upon the solitude of Mr. Rainscourt, who had remained the whole day upon the sofa, with the urn on the table before him,

## THE KING'S -OWN

and the shutters closed to exclude the light. The worthy curate called upon him every evening, renewing his topics of consolation, and pointing out the duty of Christian resignation. A deep sigh! a heavy Ah! or a long-drawn Oh! were all the variety of answers that could be obtained for some days. But time does wonders; and Mr. Rainscourt at last inclined an ear to the news of the day, and listened with marked attention to the answers which he elicited from the curate, by his indirect questions, as to what the world said about him.

"Come, come, Mr. Rainscourt, do not indulge your grief any more. Excess becomes criminal. It is my duty to tell you so, and yours to attend to me. It is not to be expected that you will immediately return to the world and its amusements; but as there must be a beginning, why not come and take your family dinner to-day with Mrs. Potts and me? Now let me persuade you—she will be delighted to see you—we dine at five. A hot joint—nothing more."

Rainscourt, who was rather tired of solitude, refused in such a way as to induce the worthy curate to reiterate his invitation, and at length, with great apparent unwillingness, consented. The curate sat with him until the dinner hour, when, leaning on the pastor's arm, Rainscourt walked down the street in all the trappings of his woe, and his eyes never once raised from the ground.

"There's Mr. Rainscourt! There's Mr. Rainscourt!" whispered some of the promenaders who were coming up the street.

"No! that's not him."

"Yes it is, walking with Mr. Potts! Don't you see his beautiful large dog following him? He never walks without it. An't it a beauty? It's a Polygar dog from the East Indies. His name is Tippoo."

The house of the curate was but a short distance from the lodgings occupied by Mr. Rainscourt. They soon entered, and were hid from the prying eyes of the idle and the curious.

"I have persuaded Mr. Rainscourt to come and take a family dinner with us, my dear."

"Quite delighted to see him," replied Mrs. Potts, casting a sidelong angry glance at her husband.

Mr. Rainscourt made a slight bow, and threw himself on the sofa, covering his face with his hand, as if the light was hideous.

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Mrs. Potts took the opportunity of escaping by the door, beckoning to her husband as soon as she was outside.

"And I will go and decant the wine.—Quite in the family way, Mr. Rainscourt—no ceremony. You'll excuse me," continued the curate, as he obeyed the summons of his wife, like a schoolboy ordered up to be birched.

"Well, my dear?" interrogated Mr. Potts humbly, as soon as the door was closed. But Mrs. Potts made no reply, until she had led her husband to such a distance from the parlour as she imagined would prevent Mr. Rainscourt from being roused by the high pitch to which she intended to raise her voice.

"I do declare, Mr. Potts, you are a complete fool. Saturday—all the maids washing—and ask him to dinner! There's positively nothing to eat. It really is too provoking."

"Well, my dear, what does it matter? The poor man will in all probability not eat a bit—he is so overcome."

"So over-fiddlesticked!" replied the lady. "Grief never hurts the appetite, Mr. Potts; on the contrary, people care more then about a good dinner than at other times. It's the only enjoyment they can have without being accused by the world of want of feeling."

"Well, you know better than I, my dear; but I really think that if you were to die I could not eat a bit."

"And I tell you, Mr. Potts, I could, if you were to die to-morrow. So stupid of you!—Sally, run and take off the tablecloth—it's quite dirty; put on one of the fine damask."

"They will be very large for the table, ma'am."

"Never mind—be quick, and step next door, and ask the old German to come in and wait at table. He shall have a pint of strong beer."

Sally did as she was bid. Mr. Potts, whose wine had been decanted long before, and Mrs. Potts, who had vented her spleen upon her husband, returned into the parlour together.

"My dear Mr. Potts is so particular about decanting his wine," observed the lady, with a gracious smile, as she entered; "he is so long about it, and scolds me so if ever I wish to do it for him."

Mr. Potts was a little surprised at the last accusation; but as he had long been drilled, he laughed assent. A tedious half-hour—during which the lady had all the conversation to

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herself, for the curate answered only in monosyllabic compliance, and Rainscourt made no answer whatever—elapsed before dinner was announced by the German mercenary who had been subsidised.

“Meinheer, de dinner was upon de table.”

“Come, Mr. Rainscourt,” said the curate, in a persuasive tone.

Rainscourt got up, and without offering his arm to the lady, who had her own bowed out in readiness, stalked out of the room by the side of Mr. Potts, followed by his wife, who by her looks seemed to imply that she considered that the demise of one woman was no excuse for a breach of politeness towards another.

The covers were removed—two small soles (much *too small* for three people) and a dish of potatoes. “Will you allow me to offer you a little sole, Mr. Rainscourt? I am afraid you will have a very poor dinner.”

Rainscourt bowed in the negative, and the soles disappeared in a very short time between the respective organs of mastication of Mr. and Mrs. Potts.

The dishes of the first course were removed; and the German appeared with a covered dish, followed by Sally, who brought some vegetables, and returned to the kitchen for more.

“I’m afraid you will have a very poor dinner,” repeated the lady. “Take off the cover, Snieder.—Will you allow me to help you to a piece of this?”

Rainscourt turned his head round to see if the object offered was such as to tempt his appetite, and beheld—a smoking bullock’s heart!

“My wife, my wife!” exclaimed he, as he darted from his chair; and covering his face as if to hide from his sight the object which occasioned the concatenation of ideas, attempted to run out of the room.

But his escape was not so easy. In his hurried movement he had entangled himself with the long table-cloth that trailed on the carpet, and, to the dismay of the party, everything that was on the table was swept off in his retreat; and as he had blindfolded himself, he ran with such force against the German, who was in the act of receiving a dish from Sally, that precipitating him against her, they both rolled prostrate on the floor.

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"Ah, mein Got, mein Got!" roared the German, as his face was smothered with the hot stewed peas, a dish of which he was carrying as he fell on his back.

"Oh, my eye, my eye!" bellowed Sally, as she rolled upon the floor.

"My wife, my wife!" reiterated Rainscourt, as he trampled over them, and secured his retreat.

"And oh, my dinner, my dinner!" ejaculated the curate, as he surveyed the general wreck.

"And oh, you fool, you fool, Mr. Potts!" echoed the lady, with her arms akimbo, "to ask such a man to dine with you!"

"Well, I had no idea that he could have taken it so much to *heart*," replied the curate meekly.

But we must follow Rainscourt, who—whether really agitated by the circumstance, or aware that it would be bruited abroad, thought that a display of agitation would be advisable—proceeded with hurried steps to the promenades, where he glided through the thoughtless crowd with the silent rapidity of a ghost. Having sufficiently awakened the curiosity of the spectators, he sank down on one of the most retired benches, with his eyes for some time thrown up in contemplation of the fleecy clouds, beyond which kind spirits are supposed to look down and weep over the follies and inconsistencies of an erring world. Casting his eyes to earth, he beheld—horror upon horrors—the detested bullock's heart, which his great Polygar dog had seized during the confusion of the dinner scene, and had followed him out with it in his mouth. Finding it too hot to carry immediately after its seizure, he had for a time laid it down and had just arrived with it. There he was, not a foot from the bench, his jaws distended with the prize, tossing up his head as if in mockery of his master, and wagging his long feathered tail.

Rainscourt again made a precipitate retreat to his own lodgings, accompanied by the faithful animal, who, delighted at the unusual rapidity of his master's movements, bounded before him with his treasure, of which he was much too polite to think of making a repast until a more seasonable opportunity. Rainscourt knocked at the door; as soon as it was opened the dog bounced up before him, entering the chamber of woe, and crouching under the table upon which the golden urn was placed, with the heart between his paws, saluted his master with

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a rap or two of his tail on the carpet, and commenced his dinner.

The servant was summoned, and Rainscourt, without looking at either the urn, the dog, or the man, cried in an angry tone, "Take that heart and throw it away immediately."

"Sir!" replied the domestic, with astonishment, who did not observe the dog and his occupation.

"Throw it away immediately, sir—do you hear?"

"Yes, sir," replied the man, taking the urn from the table, and quitting the room with it, muttering to himself as he descended the stairs, "I thought it wouldn't last long." Having obeyed his supposed instructions, he returned—"If you please, sir, where am I to put the piece of plate?"

"The piece of plate!"—Rainscourt turned round, and beheld the vacant urn. It was too much—that evening he ordered the horses, and left Cheltenham for ever.

Various were the reports of the subsequent week. Some said that the fierce dog had broken open the urn, and devoured the embalmed heart. Some told one story—some another; and before the week was over, all the stories had become incomprehensible.

In one point they all agreed—that Mr. Rainscourt's grief was all humbug.

"'Tis well!—Thou hast 'done thy spiriting gently,' or, for thy tardy coming, I would have sentenced thee to the task of infusing thy spirit into the consistent Eldon, or into Arthur Duke of Wellington—where, like a viper at a file, thou shouldest have tortured thyself in vain."



## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER XLIX

There leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep,  
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims.

MILTON.

CONGRATULATE me, reader, that, notwithstanding I have been beating against wind and tide, that is to say, writing this book, through all the rolling and pitching, headache and indigestion, incident to the confined and unnatural life of a sailor, I have arrived at my last chapter. You may be surprised at this assertion, finding yourself in the middle of the third volume; but such is the fact. Doubtless you have imagined that, according to the usual method, I had begun at the beginning, and would have finished at the end. Had I done so, this work would not have been so near to a close as, thank Heaven, it is at present. At times I have been gay, at others, sad; and I am obliged to write according to my humour, which, as variable as the wind, seldom continues in one direction. I have proceeded with this book as I should do if I had had to build a ship. The dimensions of every separate piece of timber I knew by the sheer-draught which lay before me. It therefore made no difference upon which I began, as they all were to be cut out before I bolted them together. I should have taken them just as they came to hand, and sorted them for their respective uses. My keel is laid on the slips, and my stern is raised; these will do for futtocks—these for beams. I lay those aside for riders; and out of these gnarled and twisted pieces of oak, I select my knees. It is of little consequence on which my adze is first employed. Thus it was that a fit of melancholy produced the last half of the third volume; and my stern-post, transoms, and fashion-pieces were framed out almost before my floor-timbers were laid. But you will perceive that this is of no consequence. All are now bolted together; and with the exception of a little dubbing away here and there, a little gingerbread work, and a coat of paint, she is ready for launching. Now all is ready.—Give me the bottle of wine—and,

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as she rushes into the sea of public opinion, upon which her merits are to be ascertained, I christen her "THE KING'S OWN."

And now that she is afloat, I must candidly acknowledge that I am not exactly pleased with her. To speak technically, her figure-head is not thrown out enough. To translate this observation into plain English, I find, on turning over the different chapters, that my hero, as I have often designated him, is not sufficiently the hero of my tale. As soon as he is shipped on board of a man-of-war, he becomes as insignificant as a midshipman must unavoidably be from his humble situation. I see the error—yet I cannot correct it, without overthrowing all "rules and regulations," which I cannot persuade myself to do, even in a work of fiction. Trammelled as I am by "the service," I can only plead guilty to what it is impossible to amend without commencing *de novo*—for everything and everybody must find their level on board of a king's ship. Well, I've one comfort left—Sir Walter Scott has never succeeded in making a hero; or, in other words, his best characters are not those which commonly go under the designation of "the hero." I am afraid there is something irreclaimably insipid in these *preux chevaliers*.

But I must go in search of the *Aspasia*. There she is, with studding-sails set, about fifty miles to the northward of the Cape of Good Hope; and I think that when the reader has finished this chapter, he will be inclined to surmise that the author, as well as the *Aspasia*, has most decidedly "doubled the Cape." The frigate was standing her course before a light breeze, at the rate of four or five knots an hour, and Captain M—— was standing at the break of the gangway, talking with the first lieutenant, when the man stationed at the masthead called out, "A rock on the lee-bow!" The *Télémaque* shoal, which is supposed to exist somewhere to the southward of the Cape, but whose situation has never been ascertained, had just before been the subject of their conversation. Startled at the intelligence, Captain M—— ordered the studding-sails to be taken in, and hailing the man at the masthead, inquired how far the rock was distant from the ship.

"I can see it off the fore-yard," answered Pearce, the master, who had immediately ascended the rigging upon the report.

## THE KING'S OWN

The first lieutenant now went aloft, and soon brought it down to the lower ratlines. In a few minutes it was distinctly seen from the deck of the frigate.

The ship's course was altered three or four points, that no risk might be incurred; and Captain M——, directing the people aloft to keep a sharp look-out for any change in the colour of the water, continued to near the supposed danger in a slanting direction.

The rock appeared to be about six or seven feet above the water's edge, with a base of four or five feet in diameter. To the great surprise of all parties, there was no apparent change in colour to indicate that they shoaled their water; and it was not until they hove-to within two cables' length, and the cutter was ordered to be cleared away to examine it, that they perceived that the object of their scrutiny was in motion. This was now evident, and in a direction crossing the stern of the ship.

"I think that it is some kind of fish," observed Seymour; "I saw it raise its tail a little out of the water."

And such it proved to be, as it shortly afterwards passed the ship within half a cable's length. It was a large spermaceti whale, on the head of which some disease had formed an enormous spongy excrescence, which had the appearance of a rock, and was so buoyant that, although the animal made several attempts as it approached the ship, it could not sink under water. Captain M——, satisfied that it really was as we have described, again made sail, and pursued his course.

"It is very strange and very important," observed he, "that a disease of any description can scarcely be confined to one individual, but must pervade the whole species. This circumstance may account for the many rocks reported to have been seen in various parts of the southern hemisphere, and which have never been afterwards fallen in with. A more complete deception I never witnessed."

"Had we hauled off sooner, and not have examined it, I should have had no hesitation in asserting most confidently that we had seen a rock," answered the first lieutenant.

Captain M—— went below, and was soon after at table with the first lieutenant and Macallan, who had been invited to dine in the cabin. After dinner, the subject was again introduced. "I have my doubts, sir," observed the first

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lieutenant, "whether I shall ever venture to tell the story in England. I never should be believed."

*Le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable,*" answered Captain M——; "and I am afraid that too often a great illiberality is shown towards travellers, who, after having encountered great difficulties and dangers, have the mortification not to be credited upon their return. Although credulity is to be guarded against, I do not know a greater proof of ignorance than refusing to believe anything because it does not exactly coincide with one's own ideas. The more confined these may be, from want of education or knowledge, the more incredulous people are apt to become. Two of the most enterprising travellers of modern days, Bruce and Le Vaillant, were ridiculed and discredited upon their return. Subsequent travellers, who went the same track as the former, with a view to confute, were obliged to corroborate his assertions; and all who have followed the latter have acknowledged the correctness of his statements."

"Your observations remind me of the story of the old woman and her grandson," replied the first lieutenant. "You recollect it, I presume?"

"Indeed I do not," said Captain M——; "pray favour me with it."

The first lieutenant then narrated, with a considerable degree of humour, the following story:—

"A lad who had been some years at sea returned home to his aged grandmother, who was naturally curious to hear his adventures.—'Now, Jack,' said the old woman, 'tell me all you've seen, and tell me the most wonderful things first.'

"'Well, granny, when we were in the Red Sea, we anchored close to the shore, and when we hove the anchor up, there was a chariot wheel hanging to it.'

"'Oh! Jack, Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red Sea, you know; that proves the Bible is all true. Well, Jack, and what else did you see?'

"'Why, granny, when I was in the West Indies, I saw whole mountains of sugar, and the rivers between them were all rum.'

"'True, true,' said the old woman, smacking her lips; 'we get all the sugar and rum from there, you know. Pray, Jack, did you ever see a mermaid?'

"'Why, no, granny, but I've seen a merman.'

## THE KING'S OWN

“‘Well, let’s hear, Jack.’

“‘Why, granny, when we anchored to the northward of St. Kitt’s one Sunday morning, a voice called us from alongside, and when we looked over, there was a merman just come to the top of the water; he stroked down his hair, and touched it, as we do our hats, to the captain, and told him that he would feel much obliged to him to trip his anchor, as it had been let go just before the door of his house below, which they could not open in consequence, and his wife would be too late to go to church.’

“‘God bless me!’ says the old woman; ‘why, they’re Christians, I do declare!—And now, Jack, tell me something more.’

“Jack, whose invention was probably exhausted, then told her that he had seen hundreds of fish flying in the air.

“‘Come, come, Jack,’ said the old woman, ‘now you’re *bamming* me—don’t attempt to put such stories off on your old granny. The chariot wheel I can believe, because it is likely; the sugar and rum I know to be true; and also the merman, for I have seen pictures of them. But as for fish flying in the air, Jack—that’s a lie.’”

“Excellent,” said Captain M——. “Then the only part that was true she rejected, believing all the monstrous lies that he had coined.”

“If any unknown individual,” observed Macallan, “and not Captain Cook, had reported the existence of such an animal as the *ornithorhynchus*, or duck-billed platypus, without bringing home the specimen as a proof, who would have credited his statement?”

“No one,” replied Captain M——. “Still, such is the scepticism of the present age, that travellers must be content with having justice done to them after they are dead.”

“That’s but cold comfort, sir,” replied the first lieutenant, rising from the table, which movement was immediately followed by the remainder of the guests, who bowed, and quitted the cabin.

. NOTE.—It is singular that the almost incredible story in the above chapter is, perhaps, the only real fact in the whole book. It will be found in the log of the ship, and signed by all the officers; and yet many of my readers will be inclined to reject this, and believe a considerable portion of the remainder of the composition to have been drawn from living characters, if so, they will be like the old woman.

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER L

*Cym.* Guiderius had  
Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star.  
*Bel.* This is he,  
Who hath upon him still that stamp.

SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN Mr. Rainscourt left Cheltenham, he wrote a hasty note to the M'Elvinas, requesting that they would take charge of Emily, whose presence would be necessary at the Hall; and when they had arranged their own affairs, would bring her with them over to Ireland, where it was his intention to reside for some time. A few days after Rainscourt had quitted Cheltenham, Emily, who since her mother's death had remained with the M'Elvinas, was accompanied by them to that home which, for the first time, she returned to with regret.

It may be inquired by the reader whether Rainscourt was not harassed by his conscience. I never heard that he showed any outward signs. Conscience has been described as a most importunate monitor, paying no respect to persons, and making cowards of us all. Now, as far as I have been able to judge from external evidence, there is not a greater courtier than conscience. It is true that, when in adversity, he upbraids us, and holds up the catalogue of our crimes so close to our noses, that we cannot help reading every line. It is true that, when suffering with disease, and terrified with the idea of going we know not where, he assails the enfeebled mind and body, and scares away the little resolution we have left. But in the heyday of youth, in the vigour of health, with the means of administering to our follies, and adding daily and hourly to our crimes, "he never mentions hell to ears polite." In fact, he never attacks a man who has more than ten thousand a year. Like a London tradesman, he never presents his bill as long as you give him fresh orders that will increase it; but once prove yourself to be "cleaned out," by no longer swelling the amount, and he pounces upon you, and demands a post-obit bond upon the next world which, like all others, will probably be found very disagree-



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able and inconvenient to liquidate. Conscience, therefore, is not an honest sturdy adviser, but a sneaking scoundrel, who allows you to run into his debt, never caring to tell you, as a caution, but rather concealing your bill from you, as long as there is a chance of your increasing its length—satisfied that, eventually, he must be paid in some shape or other.

The M'Elvinas, who could not leave Emily by herself, took up their abode at the Hall until the necessary arrangements had been completed, and then removed with her to the cottage, that they might attend to their own affairs. Emily was deeply affected at the loss of her mother. She had always been a kind and indulgent friend, who had treated her more as an equal than as one subject to authority and control. The M'Elvinas were anxious to remove Emily from the Hall, where every object that presented itself formed a link of association with her loss, and trifles in themselves would occasion a fresh burst of grief from the affectionate and sorrowful girl. And she may be pardoned when I state, that perhaps the bitterest tears which were shed were those when she threw herself on that sofa where she had remained after the abrupt departure of William Seymour.

The vicar hastened to offer his condolence; and finding that Emily was as resigned as could be expected, after a long visit walked out with M'Elvina, that he might have a more detailed account of the unfortunate event. M'Elvina related it circumstantially, but without communicating the suspicions which the story of the grooms had occasioned, for he was aware that the vicar was too charitable to allow anything but positive evidence to be of weight in an accusation so degrading to human nature.

"It is strange," observed the vicar very gravely, "but it seems as if a fatality attended the possessors of this splendid estate. The death of Admiral de Courcy was under most painful circumstances, without friend or relation to close his eyes; it was followed by that of his immediate heir, who was drowned as soon almost as the property devolved to him—and I, who was appointed to be his guardian, never beheld my charge; now we have another violent death of the possessor—and all within the space of twelve or thirteen years. You have probably heard something of the singular history of the former heir to the estate?"

## THE KING'S OWN

"I heard you state that he was drowned at sea, but nothing further."

"Or, rather, supposed to be, for we never had proof positive. He was sent away in a prize, which never was heard of; and although there is no confirmation of the fact, I have no doubt but he was lost. I do not know when I was so much distressed as at the death of that child. There was a peculiarity of incident in his history, the facts of which I have not as yet communicated to any one, as there are certain points which even distant branches of the family may wish to keep concealed; yet, upon a promise of secrecy, Mr. M'Elvina, I will impart them to you."

The promise being given, the vicar commenced with the history of Admiral de Courcy—his treatment of his wife and children—the unfortunate marriage, and more unfortunate demise of Edward Peters, or rather of Edward de Courcy—the acknowledgment of his grandson by Admiral de Courcy on his deathbed—the account of Adams—his death—the boy being sent away in a prize, and drowned at sea. "I have all the particulars in writing," continued the good man, "and the necessary documents; and his identity was easy to be proved by the mark of the broad-arrow imprinted on his shoulder by old Adams."

"Heavens! is it possible?" exclaimed M'Elvina, grasping the arm of the vicar.

"What do you mean?"

"Mean! I mean that the boy is alive—has been in your company within the last two years."

"That boy?"

"Yes, that boy—that boy is William Seymour."

"Merciful God! how inscrutable are Thy ways!" exclaimed the vicar, with astonishment and reverence. "Explain to me, my dear sir—how can you establish your assertion?"

If the reader will refer back to the circumstance of the vicar calling upon Captain M——, he will observe that, upon being made acquainted with the loss of the child, he was so much shocked that he withdrew without imparting the particulars to one who was a perfect stranger; and, on the other hand, Captain M——, when Seymour again made his appearance, after an interval of three years, not having been put in possession of these facts, or even knowing the vicar's address

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or name, had no means of communicating the intelligence of the boy's recovery.

"I must now, sir," said M'Elvina to the vicar, "return the confidence which you have placed in me, under the same promise of secrecy, by making you acquainted with some particulars of my former life, at which I acknowledge I have reason to blush, and which nothing but the interests of William Seymour would have induced me to disclose."

M'Elvina then acknowledged his having formerly been engaged in smuggling—his picking up the boy from the wreck—his care of him for three years—the capture of his vessel by Captain M——, and the circumstances that had induced Captain M—— to take the boy under his protection. The mark was as legible as ever, and there could be no doubt of his identity being satisfactorily established.

The vicar listened to the narration with the interest which it deserved, and acknowledged his conviction of the clearness of the evidence by observing—

"This will be a heavy blow to our dear Emily."

"Not a very heavy one, I imagine," replied M'Elvina, who immediately relieved the mind of the worthy man by communicating the attachment between them, and the honourable behaviour of Seymour.

"How very strange this is!" replied the vicar. "It really would be a good subject for a novel. I only trust that, like all inventions of the kind, it may end as happily."

"I trust so too; but let us now consider what must be done."

"I should advise his being sent for immediately."

"And so should I; but I expect, from the last accounts which I received from him, that the ship will have left her station to return home before our letters can arrive there. My plan is, to keep quiet until his return. The facts are known, and can be established by us alone. Let us immediately take such precautions as our legal advisers may think requisite, that proofs may not be wanting in case of our sudden demise; but we must not act until he arrives in the country, for Mr. Rainscourt is a difficult and dangerous person to deal with."

"You are right," replied the vicar. "When do you leave this for Ireland?"

## THE KING'S OWN

"In a few days, but I shall be ready to appear the moment that I hear of the ship's arrival. In the meantime, I shall make the necessary affidavits, in case of accident."

M'Elvina and the vicar separated. M'Elvina, like a dutiful husband, communicated the joyful intelligence to his wife, and his wife, to soothe Emily under her affliction, although she kept the secret, now talked of Seymour. In a few days the arrangements were made—the cottage was put into an agent's hands to be disposed of; and quitting with regret an abode in which they had passed some years of unalloyed happiness, they set off for Galway, where they found Rainscourt on their arrival. Consigning his daughter to his care, they removed to their own house, which was on the property which M'Elvina had purchased, and about four miles distant from the castle. M'Elvina's name was a passport to the hearts of his tenants, who declared that the head of the house had come unto his own again. That he had the true eye of the M'Elvins there was no mistaking, for no other family had such an eye. That his honour had gladdened their hearts by seeing the property into the old family again—as old a one as any in old Ireland.

M'Elvina, like a wise man, held his tongue; and then they talked of their misfortunes—of the bad potato crop—of arrears of rent—one demand was heaped upon another, until M'Elvina was ultimately obliged to refer them all to the agent, whom he requested to be as lenient as possible.

Emily was now reinstated in the castle where she had passed the first years of her existence, and found that all in it was new, except her old nurse, Norah. The contiguity of the M'Elvins was a source of comfort to her, for she could not admire the dissipated companions of her father. Her life was solitary; but she had numerous resources within herself, and the winter passed rapidly away.

In the spring she returned to London with her father, who proudly introduced his daughter. Many were the solicitations of those who admired her person, or her purse. But in vain: her heart was pre-engaged; and it was with pleasure that she returned to Ireland, after the season was over, to renew her intimacy with the M'Elvins, and to cherish, in her solitude, the remembrance of the handsome and high-minded William Seymour.

# THE KING'S OWN

## CHAPTER LI

And now, with sails declined,  
The wandering vessel drove before the wind ;  
Tossed and retossed aloft, and then alow ;  
Nor port they seek, nor certain course they know,  
But every moment wait the coming blow.

DRYDEN.

THREE days after the *Aspasia* had taken a fresh departure from the Western Isles, a thick fog came on, the continuance of which prevented them from ascertaining their situation by the chronometer. The wind, which blew favourably from the south-east, had by their dead reckoning driven them as far north as the latitude of Ushant, without their once having had an opportunity of finding out the precise situation of the frigate. The wind now shifted more to the eastward, and increasing to a gale, Captain M—— determined upon making Cape Clear, on the southern coast of Ireland ; but having obtained sights for the chronometers, it was discovered that they were far to the westward of the reckoning, and had no chance of making the point of land which they had intended. For many days they had to contend against strong easterly gales, with a heavy sea, and had sought shelter under the western coast of Ireland.

The weather moderating, and the wind veering again to the southward, the frigate's head was put towards the shore, that they might take a fresh departure ; but scarcely had they time to congratulate themselves upon the prospect of soon gaining a port, when there was every appearance of another gale coming on from the south-west. As this was from a quarter which, in all probability, would scarcely allow the frigate to weather Mizen-head, she was hauled off on the larboard tack, and all sail put on her which prudence would permit in the heavy cross sea, which had not yet subsided.

"We shall have it all back again, I am afraid, sir," observed the master, looking to windward at the horizon, which, black as pitch, served as a background to relieve the white curling

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tops of the seas. "Shall we have the trysails up, and bend them?"

"The boatswain is down after them now, Pearce," said the first lieutenant.

"The weather is indeed threatening," replied the captain, as he turned from the weather gangway, where he had been standing, and wiped the spray from his face, with which the atmosphere was charged; "and I perceive that the glass is very low. Send the small sails down out of the tops; as soon as the staysail is on her, lower the gaff, and furl the spanker; the watch will do. When we go to quarters, we'll double-breech the guns. Let the carpenter have his tarpaulins ready for battening down; send for the boatswain, and let the boats on the booms be well secured. Is that eight bells striking? Then pipe to supper first; and, Mr. Hardy," added Captain M——, as he descended the companion-ladder. "they may as well hook the rolling-tackles again."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Hardy, as the captain disappeared. "I say, master, the skipper don't like it; I'll swear that by his look as he turned from the gangway. He was as stern as the figure-head of the *Mars*."

"That's just his way; if even the elements threaten him, he returns the look of defiance."

"He does so," replied the master, who appeared to be unusually grave (as if in sad presentiment of evil). "I've watched him often.—But it's no use—they mind but one."

"Very true—neither can you conciliate them by smiling; the only way to look is to look sharp out. Eh, master?" said the first lieutenant, slapping him familiarly on the back.

"Come, no skylarking, Hardy; it's easy to tell the skipper isn't on deck. I expect as much sleep to-night as a dog vane—these south-westerns generally last their three days."

"I am glad to hear that," said Merrick, a youngster with an oval laughing face, who, being a favourite with both the officers, had ventured to the weather-side of the quarter-deck in the absence of the captain.

"And why, Mr. Merrick?" inquired the master.

"Oh, it's my morning watch to-morrow. We shall be all snug; no sails to trim, no sails to set, and no holystoning the deck—nothing to do but to keep myself warm under the weather bulwarks."



## THE KING'S OWN

"Ah, you idle scamp," said the first lieutenant, smiling.

"So, young man, you wish us to be on deck all night, that you may have nothing to do in the morning. The day will come when you will know what responsibility is," retorted Pearce.

"If you're up all night, sir," replied the boy, laughing, "you'll want a cup of coffee in the morning watch. I shall come in for my share of that, you know."

"Ah, well, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good," observed Pearce; "but you are young to be selfish."

"Indeed, I am not selfish, sir," replied the boy, hurt at the rebuke from one who had been kind to him, and to whom he was attached. "I was only joking. I only meant," continued he, feeling deeply, but not at the moment able to describe his feelings—"I only said—oh! d—n the coffee."

"And now you are only swearing, I suppose," replied the master.

"Well, it's enough to make a saint swear to be accused of being selfish, and by you too."

"Well, well, youngster, there's enough of it—you spoke without thinking. Go down to your tea now, and you shall have your share of the coffee to-morrow, if there is any."

After supper the watch was called, and the directions given by the captain to the first lieutenant were punctually obeyed. The drum then beat to quarters earlier than usual; the guns were doubly secured; the dead-lights shipped abaft; the number of inches of water in the well made known by the carpenter; the sobriety of the men ascertained by the officers stationed at their respective guns; and everything that was ordered to be executed, or to be held in readiness, in the several departments, reported to the captain.

"Now, Mr. Hardy, we'll make her all snug for the night. Furl the fore and mizen topsail, and close-reef the main—that, with the foresail, fore-staysail, and trysail, will be enough for her."

"Had we not better reef the foresail, sir?" said Pearce. "I suspect we shall have to do it before twelve o'clock, if we do not now."

"Very right, Mr. Pearce; we will do so. Is the main-trysail bent?"

"All bent, sir, and the sheet aft."

## THE KING'S OWN

"Then beat a retreat, and turn the hands up—shorten sail."

This duty was performed, and the hammocks piped down as the last glimmering of daylight disappeared.

The gale increased rapidly during the first watch. Large drops of rain mingled with the spray, distant thunder rolled to windward, and occasional gleams of lightning pierced through the intense darkness of the night. The officers and men of the watches below, with sealed eyes and thoughtless hearts, were in their hammocks, trusting to those on deck for security. But the night was terrific, and the captain, first lieutenant, and master, from the responsibility of their situations, continued on deck, as did many of the officers termed idlers, such as the surgeon and purser, who, although their presence was not required, felt no inclination to sleep. By four o'clock in the morning the gale was at its height. The lightning darted through the sky in every direction, and the thunder-claps for the time overpowered the noise of the wind as it roared through the shrouds. The sea, striking on the fore-channels, was thrown aft with violence over the quarter-deck and waist of the ship, as she laboured through the agitated sea.

"If this lasts much longer we must take the foresail off of her, and give her the main-staysail," said Hardy to the master.

"We must, indeed," replied the captain, who was standing by them; "but the day is breaking. Let us wait a little—ease her, quartermaster."

"Ease her it is, sir."

At daylight, the gale having rather increased than shown any symptoms of abating, the captain was giving directions for the foresail to be taken off, when the seaman who was stationed to look out on the lee-gangway cried out, "A sail on the lee-beam!"

"A sail on the lee-beam, sir!" reported the officer of the watch to the captain, as he held on by a rope with one hand, and touched his hat with the other.

"Here, youngster, tell the sentry at the cabin door to give you my deck glass," said Captain M—— to Merrick, who was one of the midshipmen of the morning watch.

"She's a large ship, sir—main and mizen masts both gone," reported Hardy, who had mounted up three or four ratlines of the main-rigging.

## THE KING'S OWN

The midshipman brought up the glass; and the captain, first passing his arm round the fore-brace to secure himself from falling to leeward with the lurching of the ship, as soon as he could bring the strange vessel into the field of the glass exclaimed, "A line-of-battle ship, by Heavens! and if I am any judge of a hull, or the painting of a ship, she is no Englishman." Other glasses were now produced, and the opinion of the captain was corroborated by that of the officers on deck.

"Keep fast the foresail, Mr. Hardy. We'll edge down to her. Quartermaster, see the signal halyards all clear."

The captain went down to his cabin, while the frigate was kept away as he directed, the master standing at the conn. He soon came up again: "Hoist No. 3 at the fore, and No. 8 at the main. We'll see if she can answer the private signal."

It was done, and the frigate, rolling heavily in the trough of the sea, and impelled by the furious elements, rapidly closed with the stranger. In less than an hour they were within half a mile of her; but the private signal remained unanswered.

"Now then, bring her to the wind, Mr. Pearce," said Captain M——, who had his glass upon the vessel.

The frigate was luffed handsomely to the wind, not however without shipping a heavy sea. The gale, which during the time that she was kept away before the wind had the appearance, which it always has, of having decreased in force, now that she presented her broadside to it roared again in all its fury.

"Call the gunner—clear away the long gun forward—try with the rammer whether the shot has started from the cartridge, and then fire across the bows of that vessel."

The men cast loose the gun, and the gunner, taking out the bed and coin to obtain the greatest elevation to counteract the heel of the frigate, watched the lurch, and pitched the shot close to the forefoot of the disabled vessel, who immediately showed French colours over her weather-quarter.

"French colours, sir!" cried two or three at a breath.

"Beat to quarters, Mr. Hardy," said Captain M——.

"Shall we cast loose the main-deck guns?"

"No, no—that will be useless; we shall not be able to fire them, and we may have them through the sides. We'll try her with the carronades."

## THE KING'S OWN

It was easy to perceive, without the assistance of a glass, that the men on board the French line-of-battle ship were attempting, in no very scientific manner, to get a jury-mast up abaft, that by putting after-sail on her they might keep their vessel to the wind. The foresail they dared not take off, as without any sail to keep her steady, the remaining mast would in all probability have rolled over the side; but without after-sail the ship would not keep to the wind, and the consequence was, that she was two points off the wind, forging fast through the water, notwithstanding that the helm was hard a-lee.

"Where are we now, Mr. Pearce?" interrogated the captain—"about eight or nine leagues from the land?"

"Say seven leagues, sir, if you please," replied the master, "until I can give you an exact answer," and he descended the companion-ladder to work up his reckoning.

"She's leaving us, Mr. Hardy; keep more away, and run abreast of her. Now, my lads, watch the weather roll—round and grape—don't throw a shot away—aim at the quarter-deck ports. If we can prevent her from getting up her jury-masts, she is done for."

"As for the matter of that," said the quartermaster, who was captain of one of the quarter-deck guns, "we might save our shot. They haven't *nous* enough to get them up if left all to themselves—however, here's a slap at her."

The frigate had now closed within three cables' length of the line-of-battle ship, and considering the extreme difficulty of hitting any mark under such disadvantages, a well-directed fire was thrown in by her disciplined seamen. The enemy attempted to return the fire from the weather main-deck guns, but it was a service of such difficulty and danger, that he more than once abandoned it. Two or three guns disappearing from the ports, proved that they had either rolled to leeward, or had been precipitated down the hatchways. This was indeed the case, and the French sailors were so much alarmed from the serious disasters that had already ensued, that they either quitted their quarters, or, afraid to stand behind the guns when they were fired, no aim was taken, and the shots were thrown away. Had the two ships been equally manned, the disadvantage, under all the misfortunes of the Frenchman, would have been on the side of the frigate; but the gale itself was more than sufficient employment for the undisciplined crew of the

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line-of-battle ship. The fire from the frigate was kept up with vigour, although the vessel lurched so heavily, as often to throw the men who were stationed at the guns into the lee scuppers, rolling one over the other in the water with which the decks were floated; but this was only a subject of merriment, and they resumed their task with the careless spirit of British seamen. The fire, difficult as it was to take any precise aim, had the effect intended, that of preventing the French vessel from rigging anything like a jury-mast. Occasionally the line-of-battle ship kept more away, to avoid the grape, by increasing her distance; but the frigate's course was regulated by that of her opponent, and she continued her galling pursuit.

### CHAPTER LII

Heaven's loud artillery began to play,  
And wrath divine in dreadful peals convey;  
Darkness and raging winds their terrors join,  
And storms of rain with storms of fire combine.  
Some run ashore upon the shoaly land.

BLACKMORE.

IT was no time for man to war against man. The powers of Heaven were loose, and in all their fury. The wind howled, the sea raged, the thunder stunned, and the lightning blinded. The Eternal was present in all His majesty; yet pigmy mortals were contending. But Captain M—— was unmoved, unawed, unchecked; and the men, stimulated by his example, and careless of everything, heeded not the warring of the elements.

"Sit on your powder-box and keep it dry, you young monkey," said the quartermaster, who was captain of the gun, to the lad who had the cartridge ready for reloading it. The fire upon the French vessel was warmly kept up, when the master again came on deck, and stated to the captain that they could not be more than four leagues from a dead lee-shore, which, by keeping away after the French vessel, they must be nearing fast.

"She cannot stand this long, sir. Look to windward—the gale increases—there is a fresh hand at the 'bellows.'"

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The wind now redoubled its fury, and the rain, that took a horizontal instead of a perpendicular direction from the force of the wind, fed the gale instead of lulling it. The thunder rolled; and the frigate was so drenched with water, that the guns were primed and reprimed, without the fire communicating to the powder, which in a few seconds was saturated with the rain and spray. This was but of little consequence, as the squall and torrents of rain had now hid the enemy from their sight. "Look out for her, my men, as soon as the squall passes over," cried Captain M——.

A flash of lightning, that blinded them for a time, was followed by a peal of thunder, so close that the timbers of the ship trembled with the vibration of the air. A second hostile meeting of electricity took place, and the fluid darted down the side of the frigate's mainmast, passing through the quarter-deck in the direction of the powder magazine. Captain M——, the first lieutenant, master, and fifty or sixty of the men were struck down by the violence of the shock. Many were killed, more wounded, and the rest, blinded and stunned, staggered and fell to leeward with the lurching of the vessel. Gradually those who were only stunned recovered their legs, and amongst the first was the captain of the frigate. As soon as he could recall his scattered senses, with his usual presence of mind he desired the "fire-roll" to be beat by the drummer, and sent down to ascertain the extent of the mischief. A strong sulphureous smell pervaded the ship, and flew up the hatchways; and such was the confusion, that some minutes elapsed before any report could be made. It appeared that the electric fluid had passed close to the spirit-room and after-magazine, and escaped through the bottom of the vessel. Before the report had been made, the captain had given directions for taking the wounded down to the surgeon, and the bodies of the dead under the half-deck. The electric matter had divided at the foot of the mainmast, to which it had done no injury; one part, as before mentioned, having gone below, while the other, striking the iron bolt that connected the lower part of the main-bitts, had thence passed to the two foremast quarter-deck carronades, firing them both off at the same moment that it killed and wounded the men who were stationed at them. The effects of the lightning were various. The men who were close to the foot of the mainmast, holding on by the ropes



## THE KING'S OWN

belayed to the main-bitts, were burnt to a cinder, and their blackened corpses lay smoking in the remnants of their clothes, emitting an overpowering ammoniacal stench. Some were only wounded in the arm or leg; but the scathed member was shrivelled up, and they were borne down the hatchway, howling with intolerable pain. The most awful effects were at the guns. The captains of the two carronades, and several men that were near them, were dead; but had not the equipoise of the bodies been lost by the violent motion of the ship, their dreadful fate would not have been immediately perceived. Not an injury appeared—every muscle was fixed to the same position as when the fluid entered—the same expression of countenance, the eye like life as it watched the sight on the gun, the body bent forward, the arm extended, the fingers still holding the lanyard attached to the lock. Nothing but palpable evidence could convince one that they were dead.

The boy attending with his powder-box, upon which he had sat by the directions of the captain of the gun, was desired by Captain M—to jump up and assist the men in carrying down the wounded. He sat still on his box, supported between the capstan and the stanchions of the companion hatchway, his eyes apparently fixed upon the captain, but not moving in obedience to the order, although repeated in an angry tone. He was dead!

During the confusion attending this catastrophe, the guns had been deserted. As soon as the wounded men had been taken below, the captain desired the boatswain to pipe to quarters, for the drummer when called to beat the “fire-roll” had been summoned to his last account. The guns were again manned, and the firing recommenced; but a want of energy, and the melancholy silence which prevailed, evidently showed that the men, although they obeyed, did not obey cheerfully.

“Another pull of the fore-staysail, Mr. Hardsett,” cried Captain M—— through his speaking-trumpet.

“Ay, ay, sir—clap on him, my lads,” replied the boatswain, holding his call between his teeth, as he lent the assistance of his powerful frame to the exertions of the men. The sheet was aft, and belayed, and the boatswain indulged in muttered quotations from the Scriptures: “He bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world, and sendeth forth lightnings,

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with rain ; bringing the winds out of His treasuries. He smote the first-born of Egypt."

The first lieutenant and master were in close consultation to windward. The captain stood at the lee-gangway, occasionally desiring the quartermaster at the conn to alter the course, regulating his own by that of his disabled enemy.

"I'll speak to him, then," exclaimed Pearce, as the conference broke up, and he went over to leeward to the captain.

"Captain M——, I have had the honour to serve under your command some time, and I trust you will allow that I have never shown any want of zeal in the discharge of my duty?"

"No, Mr. Pearce," replied the captain, with a grave smile ; "without compliment, you never have."

"Then, sir, you will not be affronted at, or ascribe to unworthy motives, a remark which I wish to make?"

"Most certainly not ; as I am persuaded that you will never make any observation inconsistent with your duty, or infringing upon the rules of the service."

"Then, sir, with all due submission to you, I do think, and it is the opinion of the other officers as well, that our present employment, under existing circumstances, is tempting, if not insulting, the Almighty. Look at the sky, look at the raging sea, hear the wind, and call to mind the effects of the lightning not one half-hour since. When the Almighty appears in all His wrath, in all His tremendous majesty, is it a time for us poor mortals to be at strife ? What is our feeble artillery, what is the roar of our cannon, compared to the withering and consuming artillery of Heaven ? Has He not told us so ? and do not the ship's company, by their dispirited conduct since the vessel was struck, acknowledge it ? The officers all feel it, sir. Is it not presumptuous—with all due submission, sir, is it not wicked ?"

"I respect your feelings as a Christian and as a man," replied Captain M—— ; "but I must differ with you. That the Almighty power appears, I grant ; and I feel, as you do, that God is great, and man weak and impotent. But that this storm has been raised—that this thunder rolls—that this lightning has blasted us, as a warning, I deny. The causes emanate from the Almighty ; but He leaves the effects to the arrangements of Nature, which is governed by immut-

## THE KING'S OWN

able laws. Had there been no other vessel in sight, this lightning would still have struck us; and this storm will not cease, even if we were to neglect what I consider a duty to our country."

The master touched his hat and made no answer. It was now about one o'clock, and the horizon to leeward, clearing up a little, showed the land upon the lee-beam.

"Land ho!" cried one of the men.

"Indeed," observed the captain to the master; "we are nearer than you thought."

"Something, sir, perhaps; but recollect how many hours you have kept away after this vessel."

"Very true," rejoined the captain; "and the in-draught into the bargain. I am not surprised at it."

"Shall we haul our wind, sir? we are on a dead lee-shore."

"No, Mr. Pearce, not until the fate of that vessel is decided."

"Land on the weather-bow!" reported the boatswain.

"Indeed!" said the captain; "then the affair will soon be decided."

The vessels still continued their course in a slanting direction towards the land, pursuer and pursued running on to destruction; but although various indirect hints were given by the first lieutenant and others, Captain M—— turned a deaf ear. He surveyed the dangers which presented themselves, and frowned upon them, as if in defiance.

## CHAPTER LIII

An universal cry resounds aloud,  
The sailors run in heaps, a helpless crowd;  
Art fails, and courage falls; no succour near;  
As many waves, as many deaths appear.

OVID. *Dryden's Translation.*

HOWEVER we may be inclined to extend our admiration to the feelings of self-devotion which governed the conduct of Captain M——, it cannot be a matter of surprise that the

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officers of the frigate did not coincide with his total indifference to self in the discharge of his duty. Murmur they did not; but they looked at each other, at the captain, and at the perilous situation of the vessel in silence, and with a restless change of position that indicated their anxiety. Macallan was below attending to the wounded men, or he would probably have been deputed by the others to have remonstrated with the captain. A few minutes more had elapsed, when the master again addressed him.

"I am afraid, sir, if we continue to stand on, that we shall lose the frigate," said he, respectfully touching his hat.

"Be it so," replied Captain M——; "the enemy will lose a line-of-battle ship; our country will be the gainer when the account is balanced."

"I must be permitted to doubt that, sir; the value of the enemy's ship is certainly greater; but there are other considerations."

"What are they?"

"The value of the respective officers and ships' companies, which must inevitably share the fate of the two vessels. The captain of that ship is not worth his salt. It would be politic to let him live, and continue to command. His ship will always be ours, when we want it; and in the event of a general action, he would make a gap in the enemy's line which might prove of the greatest importance. Now, sir, without drawing the parallel any further—without taking into consideration the value of the respective officers and men—I must take the liberty of observing that, on your account alone, England will be no gainer by the loss of both vessels and crews."

"Thank you for the compliment, which, as it is only feather-weight, I will allow to be thrown into the scale. But I do not agree with you. I consider war but as a game of chess, and will never hesitate to sacrifice a knight for a castle. Provided that castle is lost, Mr. Pearce," continued the captain, pointing to the French vessel, "this little frigate, if necessary, shall be knight-errant enough to bear her company."

"Very good, sir," replied Pearce, again touching his hat; "as master of this ship, I considered it my duty to state my opinion."

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"You have done your duty, Mr. Pearce, and I thank you for it; but I have also my duties to perform. One of them is, not to allow the lives of one ship's company, however brave and well-disciplined (and such I must allow to be the one I have the honour to command), to interfere with the general interests of the country we contend for. When a man enters his Majesty's service, his life is no longer to be considered his own; it belongs to his king and country, and is at their disposal. If we are lost, there will be no great difficulty in collecting another ship's company in old England as brave and as good as this. Officers as experienced are anxiously waiting for employment; and the Admiralty will have no trouble in selecting and appointing as good, if not a better captain."

The contending ships were now about two cables' length from each other, with a high rocky coast, lashed with a tremendous surf, about three-quarters of a mile to leeward. The promontory extended about two points on the weather-bow of the frigate, and a low sandy tongue of land spread itself far out on her weather-quarter, so that both vessels were completely embayed. The line-of-battle ship again made an attempt to get up some after-sail; but the well-directed fire of the frigate, whenever she rose on the tops of the mountainous waves, which at intervals hid the hulls of both vessels from each other, drove the Frenchmen from their task of safety, and it was now evident that all command of her was lost. She rolled gunwale under, and her remaining mast went by the board.

"Nothing can save her now, sir," replied the master.

"No," replied the captain; "we have done our work, and must now try to save ourselves."

"Secure the guns—be smart, my lads, you work for your lives. We must put the mainsail on her, Mr. Pearce, and claw off if we can."

The master shook his head. "Hands by the clue-garnets and buntlines—man the mainsheet—let go those leech-lines, youngster—haul aboard."

"It's a pity, too, by G—d," said the captain, looking over the hammock-rails at the French vessel, which was now running before the wind right on to the shore—"eight or nine hundred poor devils will be called to their last

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account in the course of a few minutes. I wish we could save them."

"You should have thought of that before, sir," said the master, with a grave smile at this reaction of feeling on the part of the captain. "Nothing can save them, and I am afraid that nothing but a slant of wind or a miracle can help ourselves."

"She has struck, sir, and is over on her broadside," said the quartermaster, who was standing on the carronade slide.

"Mind your conn, sir ; keep your eyes on the weather-leech of the sail, and not upon that ship," answered the captain, with asperity.

In the meantime the mainsail had been set by the first lieutenant, and the crew, unoccupied, had their eyes directed for a little while upon the French vessel, which lay on her beam-ends, enveloped in spray ; but they also perceived what, during the occupation and anxiety of action, they had not had leisure to attend to, namely, the desperate situation of their own ship. The promontory was now broad on the weather bow, and a reef of rocks, partly above water, extended from it to leeward of the frigate. Such was the anxiety of the ship's company for their own safety, that the eyes of the men were turned away from the stranded vessel, and fixed upon the rocks. The frigate did all that a gallant vessel could do, rising from the trough of the sea, and shaking the water from her, as she was occasionally buried forecastle under, from the great pressure of the sail, cleaving the huge masses of the element with her sharp stem, and trembling fore and aft with the violence of her own exertions. But the mountainous waves took her with irresistible force from her chesstree, retarding her velocity, and forcing her each moment nearer to the reef.

"Wear ship, Mr. Hardy," said the captain, who had not spoken one word since he rebuked the quartermaster ; "we have but just room."

The master directed the man at the wheel to put helm up in a firm but subdued tone, for he was at that moment thinking of his wife and children. The ship had just paid off and gathered fresh way, when she struck upon a sunken rock. A loud and piercing cry from the ship's



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company was followed by an enormous sea striking the frigate on the counter, at once heeling her over and forcing her ahead, so that she slipped off from the rock again into deep water.

"She's off again, sir," said the master.

"It's God's mercy, Mr. Pearce! Bring her to the wind as soon as you can," replied the captain, with composure. But the carpenter now ran up the hatchway, and with a pallid face and hurried tone, declared that the ship was filling fast, and could not be kept afloat more than a few minutes.

"Going down!—going down!" was spread with dreadful rapidity throughout the ship, and all discipline and subordination appeared to be at an end.

Some of the men flew to the boats hoisted up on the quarters, and were casting loose the ropes which secured them, with hands that were tremulous with anxiety and fear.

"Silence there, fore and aft!" roared the captain, in the full compass of his powerful voice. "Every man to his station. Come out of those boats directly."

All obeyed except one man, who still continued to cast loose the gripes.

"Come out, sir," repeated the captain.

"Not I, by G—d!" replied the sailor coolly.

The boarding-pikes, which had been lashed round the spanker-boom, had been detached, either from the shot of the enemy or some other means, and were lying on the deck close to the cabin skylight. The captain seizing one, and poising it brandished over his head, a third time ordered the sailor to leave the boat.

"Every man for himself, and God for us all!" was the cool answer of the refractory seaman.

The pike flew, and entered the man's bowels up to the hilt. The poor wretch staggered, made a snatch at the davit, missed it, and fell backwards over the gunwale of the boat into the sea.

"My lads," said Captain M——, emphatically addressing the men, who beheld the scene with dismay, "as long as one plank, ay, one toothpick, of this vessel swims, I command, and will be obeyed. Quartermaster, put the helm up. I have but few words to say to you, my men. The vessel is sinking,



“The Captain a third time ordered the sailor to leave the boat.”



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and we must put her on the reef—boats are useless. If she hangs together, do you hang to her as your only chance. And now farewell, my brave fellows, for we are not all likely to meet again. Look out for a soft place for her, Mr. Pearce, if you can.”

“I see but one spot where there is the least chance of her being thrown up, sir. Starboard a little—steady!—so,” were the cool directions of the master, as the ship flew with increased velocity to her doom. The captain stood on the carronade slide, from which he had addressed the men. His mien was firm and erect—not a muscle of his countenance was observed to change or move, as the sailors watched it as the barometer of their fate. Awed by the dreadful punishment of the mutineer, and restrained by their long habits of discipline, they awaited their doom in a state of intense anxiety, but in silence.

All this latter description, however, was but the event of about two minutes—which had barely expired, when the frigate dashed upon the reef!

## CHAPTER LIV

Thou, God of this great vast, rebuke those surges which wash both heaven and hell; and Thou that hast upon the winds command, bind them in brass, having called them from the deep.—SHAKSPEARE.

THE shock threw the men off their feet as they raised an appealing cry to Heaven, which was mocked by the howling of the wind and the roar of the waters. The masts, which were thrown out from their steps, waved once, twice, and then fell over the sides with a crash, as an enormous sea broke over the vessel, forcing her further on the rocks, and causing every timber and knee in her to start from its place. The masts, as they fell, and the sea, that at the same moment poured over like an impetuous cataract, swept away thirty or forty of the seamen into the boiling element under the lee. Another and another shock from the resistless and furious waves decided the fate of the resolute captain and master. The frigate parted amidships. The fore-part of her, which was firmly wedged on

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the rocks, remained. The quarter-deck and after-part turned over to the deep water, and disappeared. An enormous surge curled over it as it went down, and as if disappointed at not being able to wreak its fury upon that part of the vessel which, by sinking, had evaded it, it drove in revenge upon the remainder, forcing it several yards higher upon the reef.

Two-thirds of the ship's company were now gone—the captain, the master, and the major part of the officers and men being on the quarter-deck when the ship divided. The cry of the drowning was not heard amidst the roaring of the elements. The behaviour of the captain and the officers at this dreadful crisis has not been handed down; but if we may judge from what has already been narrated, they met their fate like British seamen.

The fore-part of the ship still held together, and, fortunately for the survivors, heeled towards the land, so as to afford some protection from the force of the seas, which dashed over it at each succeeding swell of the billows. Daylight left them, and darkness added to the despair and horror of nearly one hundred wretches, who felt at each shock, which threatened to separate the planks and timbers, as if Death was loudly knocking to claim the residue of his destined victims. Not one word was exchanged; but secured with ropes to the belaying-pins and other parts of the fore-castle where they could pass their lashings, they clung and huddled together, either absorbed in meditation or wailing with despair. Occasionally, one who had supported himself in a difficult and painful position, stimulated with the faint hopes of life, to which we all so fondly and so foolishly cling, would find that his strength was exhausted, and that he could hold no longer. After vainly imploring those near him to allow him to better his condition by a slight personal sacrifice on their part (an appeal that received no answer), he would gradually loose his hold, and drop into the surge that was commissioned by Death to receive his prey.

There are situations in human life of such powerful excitement, and in which the mechanism of the human frame becomes so rapid in its motion, that the friction of a few days will wear it out. The harrowed feelings of these poor creatures on the wreck, during the short time that

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they remained, had a greater effect in undermining the constitution than many years of laborious occupation on shore.

Fellow-countrymen, if you are at all interested with the scenes I am now describing, and which, if you have any feeling, you must be (however imperfect the description), let the author, a sailor himself, take this favourable opportunity of appealing to you in behalf of a service at once your protection and your pride. For its sake, as well as your own, listen not to those who, expatiating upon its expense, and silent upon its deserts, would put a stop to hardly-earned promotion, and blast with disappointment the energies of the incipient hero. And may those to whom the people at large have delegated their trust, and in whom they have reposed their confidence, treat with contempt the calculations, and miscalculations, of one without head and without heart!

Daylight again, as if unwillingly, appeared, and the wild scud flew past the dark clouds, that seemed to sink down with their heavy burdens till they nearly touched the sea. The waves still followed each other mountains high; the wind blew with the same violence; and as the stormy petrels flew over the billows, indicating by their presence that the gale would continue, the unfortunate survivors looked at each other in silence and despair.

I know not whether all seamen feel as I do; but I have witnessed so many miraculous escapes, so many sudden reverses, so much, beyond all hope and conception, achieved by a reliance upon Providence and your own exertions, that under the most critical circumstances I never should despair. If struggling in the centre of the Atlantic, with no vessel in sight, no strength remaining, and sinking under the wave that boiled in my ear, as memory and life were departing—still, as long as life *did* remain, as long as recollection held her seat, I never should abandon Hope—never believe that it is all over with me—till I awoke in the next world, and found it confirmed.

What would these men have valued their lives at in the morning? Yet at noon a change took place: the



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weather evidently moderated fast; and silence, that had reigned for so many hours, lost his empire, and the chances of being saved began to be calculated. A reef of rocks, many of them above water, over which the breakers still raged, lay between the wreck and the shore, and the certainty of being dashed to pieces precluded all attempts at reaching it till the weather became more moderate and the sea less agitated. But when might that be? and how long were they to resist the united attacks of hunger and fatigue?

The number of men still surviving was about seventy. Many, exhausted and wounded, were hanging in a state of insensibility by the ropes with which they had secured themselves. That our hero was among those who remained need hardly be observed, or there would have been a close to this eventful history. He was secured to the weather-side of the foremast-bitts, supported on the one side by the boatswain, and on the other by Price, the second lieutenant, next to whom was the captain of the fore-castle, one of the steadiest and best seamen in the ship, who had been pressed out of a West Indiaman, in which he had served in the capacity of second mate.

Our hero had often turned round with an intention to speak to Price; but observing that he sat crouched with his face upon his hands and knees, he waited until his messmate should raise his head up, imagining that he was occupied in secret prayer. Finding that he still continued in the same position, Seymour called to him several times. Not receiving any answer, he extended his arm and shook Price by the collar, fearing that he had swooned from cold and fatigue.

Price slowly raised his head, and looking at Seymour, answered not. His vacant stare and wild eye proclaimed at once that reason had departed. Still, as it afterwards appeared, his ruling passion remained; and from that incomprehensible quality of our structure, which proves that the mind of man is more fearfully and wonderfully made than the body, the desertion of one sense was followed by the return of another. His memory was perfect, now that his reason was gone. Surveying the scene around him, he began with all the theatrical

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action which the ropes that secured him would permit, to quote his favourite author :—

“ ‘Blow winds, and crack your cheeks—rage—blow,  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout—’ ”

“ ‘Poor Tom’s a-cold’ ”—then, shuddering, he covered up his face, and resumed his former position.

“Is this a time for spouting profane plays, Mr. Price?” said the fanatical boatswain, who was not aware of the poor man’s insanity. “Hold your peace, and call not judgment on our heads, and I prophesy that we shall be saved. ‘The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly; but yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier.’ ”

Silence ensued, which after a few minutes was interrupted by Seymour lamenting over the fate of Captain M—— and the rest of the crew who had perished.

“Well, they are in heaven before this, I hope!” observed Robinson, the captain of the forecastle.

“ ‘Many are called, but few chosen,’ ” rejoined the boatswain, who appeared by the flashing of his eye to be in a state of strong excitement. “No more in heaven than you would be, if the Almighty was pleased to cut you off in His wrath.”

“Where then, Mr. Hardsett?” inquired Robinson. “Surely not in——”

“I know—I know,” cried Price, who again lifted up his head, and with a vacant laugh commenced singing—

“ Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell!  
Hark! now I hear them—ding-dong-bell.”

“For shame, Mr. Price!” interrupted the boatswain.

“Ding-dong—ding-dong-bell.”

“Mr. Price, what does the Scripture say? ‘Judgments are prepared for scorners,’ ” continued the boatswain with vehemence.

Price had resumed his former attitude, and made no answer.

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As soon as the interruption of the lieutenant had ceased, Robinson resumed his interrogatory to the boatswain: "Where then?—not in hell, I hope."

"Ay," returned the latter, "in the fire that is never quenched, and for ever and ever."

"I hope not," replied Robinson; "I may deserve punishment, and I know I do. I've been overhauling my log-book while the sea here has been dashing over my bows and washing my figure-head; and there are some things I wish I could forget;—they will rise up in judgment against me; but surely not for ever?"

"You should have thought of that before, my good fellow. I am sorry for you—sorry for all those who have perished, for they were good seamen, and in the worldly service have done well. I was reflecting the other day whether, out of the whole navy, I should be able to muster one single ship's company in heaven."

"Well, Mr. Hardsett, it's my firm opinion, that when the hands are turned up for punishment in the next world, we shall be sarved out according to our desarts. Now, that's my belief; and I shan't change it for yours, Mr. Hardsett, for I thinks mine the more comfortable of the two."

"It won't do, Robinson; you must have faith."

"So I have, in God's mercy, boatswain."

"That won't do. Yours is not the true faith."

"Mayhap not, but I hope to ride it out with it nevertheless, for I have it well backed with hope; and if I still drive," said Robinson, musing a short time—"why, I have charity as a sheet-anchor to bring me up again. It's long odds but our bodies will soon be knocked to shivers in those breakers, and we shall then know who's right and who's wrong. I see small chance of our saving ourselves, unless indeed we could walk on the sea, and there was but One that ever did that."

"Had the apostle had faith, he would not have sunk," rejoined the boatswain.

"Have you, then, more faith than the apostle?"

"I have, thanks be to Jehovah, the true faith," cried the boatswain, raising his eyes and hands to heaven.

"Then *walk on shore*," said the captain of the forecastle, looking him steadfastly in the face.

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Stimulated by the request, which appeared to put his courage as a man, and his faith as a Christian, to the test, and at the moment fanatic even to insanity, the boatswain rose, and casting off the ropes which he had wound round his body, was about to comply with Robinson's request.

A few moments more, and the raging sea would have received him, had not our hero, in conjunction with the captain of the forecastle, held him down with all his power. "We doubt not your faith, Mr. Hardsett," said Seymour, "but the time of miracles is past. It would be self-murder. He who raised the storm will, in His own good time, save us, if He thinks fit."

Price, who had listened to the conversation, and had watched the motions of the boatswain, who was casting off the lashings which had secured him, had, unperceived, done the same, and now jumped upon his legs, and collared the astonished boatswain, roaring out—

"Zounds, show me what thou'lt do !

Woul't weep ? woul't fight ? woul't fast ? woul't tear thyself ?"

"Why, he's mad !" exclaimed the terrified boatswain, who was not far off the point himself.

"Mad !" resumed Price.

"Not a soul

But felt a fever of the mad, and played  
Some tricks of desperation.

The king's son, Ferdinand,

With hair upstarting (then like reeds, not hair),  
Was the first man that leaped ; cried, Hell is empty  
And all the devils are here !"

As the maniac finished the last words, before they could be aware of his intention, he made a spring from the deck over the bulwark, and disappeared under the wave. The boatswain, who had been diverted from his fanatical attempt by the unexpected attack of Price more than by the remonstrances of his companions, resumed his position, folding his arms, and casting his eyes to heaven. The captain of the

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forecastle was silent, and so was our hero; the thoughts of the two were upon the same subject—eternity.

Eternity!—the only theme that confuses, humbles, and alarms the proud intellect of man. What is it? The human mind can grasp any defined space, any defined time, however vast; but this is beyond time, and too great for the limited conception of man. It had no beginning, and can have no end. It cannot be multiplied, it cannot be divided, it cannot be added unto—you may attempt to subtract from it, but it is useless. Take millions and millions of years from it, take all the time that can enter into the compass of your imagination, it is still whole and undiminished as before—all calculation is lost. Think on—the brain becomes heated, and oppressed with a sensation of weight too powerful for it to bear; Reason totters in her seat, and you rise with the conviction of the impossibility of the creature attempting to fathom the Creator—humiliated with the sense of your own nothingness, and impressed with the tremendous majesty of the Deity.

Time is Man—Eternity is God!

## CHAPTER LV

Thou art perfect, then, that our ship hath touched upon the deserts of Bohemia?

Ay, my lord, and fear we have landed in ill time.

*Winter's Tale.*

ABOUT midnight the moon burst through the clouds, which gradually rolled away to the western horizon, as if they had been furled by some invisible spirits in the air. The wind, after several feeble gusts, like the last breathings of some expiring creature unwilling to loosen the "silver cord," subsided to a calm. It then shifted round to the eastward. The waves relaxed in their force until they did little more than play upon the side of the wreck, so lately the object of their fury. The dark shadows of the rocks were no longer relieved by the white foam of the surf, which had raged among them with such violence. Before morning all was calm, and the

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survivors, as they shrank and shivered in their wet garments, encouraged each other with the prospect of a speedy termination to their sufferings on the reappearance of daylight. The sun rose in splendour, and seemed, as he darted his searching rays through the cloudless expanse, to exclaim in his pride, "Behold how I bring light and heat, joy and salvation, to you late despairing creatures!" The rocks of the reef above water, which had previously been a source of horror, and had been contemplated as the sure engines of their destruction, were now joyfully reckoned as so many resting-spots for those who were about to attempt to reach the land.

The most daring and expert swimmers launched themselves into the water and made for the nearest cluster of rocks, with difficulty gaining a footing on them, after clinging by the dark and slippery sea-weed which covered their tops, like shaggy hair on the heads of so many emerging giants. The waving of the hands of the party who had succeeded in gaining the rocks, encouraged a second to follow; while others, who could not swim, were busily employed in searching for the means of supporting themselves in the water, and floating themselves on shore. Self, that had predominated, now lost its ground. Those who had allowed their shipmates to perish in attempting to gain the same place of security as themselves, without an effort in their favour, or one sigh for their unlucky fate, now that hope was revived almost to a certainty of deliverance, showed as much interest in the preservation of others lying in a state of exhaustion as they did for their own. The remaining officers recovered their authority, which had been disregarded, and the shattered fragment of the *Aspasia* reassumed their rights of discipline and obedience to the last. In a few hours, sick, disabled, and wounded were all safely landed, and the raft which had been constructed returned to the wreck, to bring on shore whatever might be useful.

Our hero, who was the only officer who had been saved, with the exception of the boatswain, had taken upon himself the command, and occupied himself with the arrangements necessary for the shelter and sustenance of his men. A range of barren hills, abruptly rising from the iron-bound coast, covered with large fragments and detached pieces of rock, without any symptom of cultivation, or any domesticated



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animal in sight which might imply that human aid was not far distant, met the eye of Seymour, as he directed it to every point, in hopes of succour for his wounded and exhausted companions. One of the men, whom he had sent to reconnoitre, returned in a few minutes, stating, that behind a jutting rock, which he pointed to with his finger, not two hundred yards distant, he had discovered a hut, or what in Ireland is termed a shealing, and that there appeared to be a bridle road from it leading over the mountain. To this shelter our hero determined to remove his disabled men, and in company with the boatswain and the man who had returned with the intelligence, set off to examine the spot. Passing the rock, he perceived that the hut, which bore every sign, from its smokeless chimney and air of negligence and decay, to have been some time deserted, stood upon a piece of ground, about an acre in extent, which had once been cultivated, but was now luxuriant with a spontaneous crop of weeds and thistles. He approached the entrance, and as the rude door creaked upon its hinges when he threw it open, was saluted by a faint voice, which cried, "*Qui va là ?*"

"Why, there's Irishmen inside," observed the sailor.

"Frenchmen rather, I should imagine," replied our hero, as he entered and discovered seven or eight of the unfortunate survivors of the French line-of-battle ship, who had crawled there, bruised, cut, and apparently in the last state of exhaustion.

"*Bon jour, camarade,*" said one of them, with difficulty raising himself on his elbow—" *As-tu d'eau-de-vie ?* "

"I am afraid not," replied Seymour, looking with compassion on the group, all of which had their eyes directed towards him, although from their wounds and bruises they were not able to turn their bodies. "We are shipwrecked as well as you."

"What! did you belong to that cursed frigate?"

"We did," replied Seymour, "and there are but few of us alive to tell the tale."

"*Vive la France !*" cried the Frenchman ; "*puisqu'elle n'a pas échappée—je n'ai plus des regrets.*"

"*Viva, viva !*" repeated the rest of the French party in faint accents.

## THE KING'S OWN

"*Et moi, je meurs content !*" murmured one, who in a few seconds afterwards expired.

"Are you the only survivors?" demanded Seymour.

"All that are left," replied the spokesman of the party, "out of eight hundred and fifty men—*Sacristie—as-tu d'eau-de-vie ?*"

"I hardly know what we have; something has been saved from the wreck," replied Seymour, "and shall cheerfully be shared with you with all the assistance we can afford. We were enemies, but we are now brothers in affliction. I must quit you to bring up our wounded men; there is sufficient room, I perceive, for all of us. *Adieu, pour le moment !*"

"*Savez-vous que c'est un brave garçon ce lieutenant-là !*" observed the Frenchman to his companions, as Seymour and his party quitted the hut.

Seymour returned to the beach, and collecting his men, found the survivors to consist of forty-four seamen and marines, the boatswain and himself. Of these, fifteen were helpless, from wounds and fractured limbs. The articles which had been collected were a variety of spars and fragments of wood, some of the small sails which had been triced up in the rigging, one or two casks of beef and pork, and a puncheon of rum, which had miraculously steered its course between the breakers, and had been landed without injury. The sails, which had been spread out to dry, were first carried up to form a bed for the sick and wounded, who in the space of an hour were all made as comfortable as circumstances would admit, a general bed having been made on the floor of the hut, upon which they and the wounded Frenchmen shared the sails between them. The spars and fragments were then brought up, and a fire made in the long-deserted hearth, while another was lighted outside for the men to dry their clothes. The cask of rum was rolled up to the door, and a portion, mixed with the water from a rill that trickled down the sides of the adjacent mountain, served out to the exhausted parties. The seamen, stripping off their clothes, and spreading them out to dry before the fire which had been made outside, collected into the hut to shield their naked bodies from the inclemency of the weather.

The spirits, which had been supplied with caution to the

## THE KING'S OWN

survivors of the French vessel, had been eagerly seized by the one who had first addressed our hero, and in half-an-hour he seemed to be quite revived. He rose, and after trying his limbs, by moving slowly to and fro, gradually recovered the entire use of them; and by the time that the circulation of his blood had been thoroughly restored by a second dose of spirits, appeared to have little to complain of. He was a powerful, well-looking man, with a large head covered with a profusion of shaggy hair. Seymour looked at him earnestly, and thought he could not well be mistaken, long as it was since they had been in company.

"Excuse me, but I think we once met at Cherbourg. Is not your name Debriseau?"

"*Sacristie!*" replied the Frenchman, seizing himself by the hair, "*je suis connu!* And who are you?"

"Oh! now I'm sure it's you," replied Seymour, laughing; "that's your old trick—do you not recollect the boy that Captain M'Elvina took off the wreck?"

"*Ah, mon ami*—Seymour, I believe—midshipman, I believe," cried Debriseau. "*Est-ce donc vous? Mais, mon Dieu, que c'est drôle*" (again pulling his hair as he grinded his teeth.) "*un diable de rencontre!*"

"And how is it that you have been on board of a French man-of-war?"

"How! Oh, I was unlucky after M'Elvina went away, and I thought on reflection, notwithstanding his arguments, that it was a dishonest sort of concern. Being pretty well acquainted with the coasts, I shipped on board as pilot."

"But, Debriseau, are you not a native of Guernsey, which is part of the British dominions?"

"Bah! it's all one, *mon ami*; we islanders are like the bat in the fable—beast or bird, as it suits us—we belong to either country. For my own part, I have a strong national affection for both."

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the boatswain, who had remained outside in charge of the cask of rum, upon which he had seated himself, occupied with his Bible. "Here's assistance coming, Mr. Seymour. There's at least twenty or thirty men descending the hill."

## THE KING'S OWN

"Hurrah for old Ireland! they are the boys that will look after a friend in distress," shouted Conolly, one of the seamen, who thus eulogised his own countrymen as he hung naked over the fire.

### CHAPTER LVI

With dauntless hardihood  
And brandished blade rush on him,  
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,  
... though he and his cursed crew  
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high.

MILTON.

THE information received from Mr. Hardsett induced our hero to break off his conversation with Debriseau, and he immediately quitted the hut. A party of men, wild in their appearance and demeanour, were bounding down through the rocks, flourishing their bludgeons over their heads, with loud shouts. They soon arrived within a few yards of the shealing, and to the astonishment of Seymour and the boatswain, who with a dozen more had resumed their clothes, seemed to eye them with hostile rather than with friendly glances. Their intentions were, however, soon manifested by their pouncing upon the habiliments of the seamen which were spread out to dry, holding them rolled up under one arm, while they flourished their shillelahs in defiance with the other.

"Avast there, my lads!" cried the boatswain; "why are you meddling with those clothes?"

A shout, with confused answers in Irish, was the incomprehensible reply.

"Conolly," cried Seymour, "you can speak to them. Ask them what they mean?"

Conolly addressed them in Irish, when an exchange of a few sentences took place.

"Bloody end to the rapparees!" said Conolly, turning to our hero. "It's helping themselves they're a'ter, instead of helping us. They say all that comes on shore from a wreck is

## THE KING'S OWN

their own by right, and that they'll have it. They asked me what was in the cask, and I told them it was the cratur, sure enough, and they say that they must have it, and everything else, and that if we don't give it up peaceably, they'll take the lives of us."

Seymour, who was aware that the surrender of the means of intoxication would probably lead to worse results, turned to his men, who had assembled outside of the hut, and had armed themselves with spars and fragments of the wreck on the first appearance of hostility, and directed them to roll the cask of rum into the hut and prepare to act on the defensive. The English seamen, indignant at such violation of the laws of hospitality, and at the loss of their clothes, immediately complied with his instructions, and with their blood boiling, were with difficulty restrained from commencing the attack.

A shaggy-headed monster, apparently the leader of the hostile party, again addressed Conolly in his own language.

"It's to know whether ye'll give up the cask quietly, or have a fight for it. The devil a pair of trousers will they give back, not even my own, though I'm an Irishman, and a Galway man to boot. By J——s, Mr. Seymour, it's to be hoped ye'll not give up the cratur without a bit of a row."

"No," replied Seymour. "Tell them that they shall not have it, and that they shall be punished for the theft they have already committed."

"You're to come and take it," roared Conolly, in Irish, to the opposing party.

"Now, my lads," cried Seymour, "you must fight hard for it—they will show little mercy if they gain the day."

The boatswain returned his Bible to his breast, and seizing the mast of the frigate's jolly-boat, which had been thrown up with the other spars, poised it with both hands on a level with his head, so as to use the foot of it as a battering-ram, and stalked before his men.

The Irish closed with loud yells, and the affray commenced with a desperation seldom to be witnessed. Many were the wounds given and received, and several of either party were

## THE KING'S OWN

levelled in the dust. The numbers were about even; but the weapons of the Irish were of a better description, each man being provided with his own shillelah of hard wood, which he had been accustomed to wield. But the boatswain did great execution as he launched forward his mast, and prostrated an Irishman every time with his cool and well-directed aim. After a few minutes' contention the Englishmen were beaten back to the shealing, where they rallied, and continued to stand at bay. Seymour, anxious at all events that the Irish should not obtain the liquor, directed Robinson, the captain of the forecask, to go into the hut, take the bung out of the cask, and start the contents. This order was obeyed, while the contest was continued outside, till M'Dermot, the leader of the Irish, called off his men, that they might recover their breath for a renewal of the attack.

"If it's the liquor you want," cried Conolly to them, by the direction of Seymour, "you must be quick about it. There it's all running away through the doors of the shealing."

This announcement had, however, the contrary effect to that which Seymour intended it should produce. Enraged at the loss of the spirits, and hoping to gain possession of the cask before it was all out, the Irish returned with renewed violence to the assault, and drove the English to the other side of the shealing, obtaining possession of the door, which they burst in to secure their prey. About eight or ten had entered and had seized upon the cask, which was not more than half emptied, when the liquor, which had run out under the door of the hut, communicated in its course with the fire that had been kindled outside. With the rapidity of lightning the flame ran up the stream that continued to flow, igniting the whole of the spirits in the cask, which blew up with a tremendous explosion, darting the fiery liquid over the whole interior, and communicating the flame to the thatch and every part of the building, which was instantaneously in ardent combustion. The shrieks of the poor disabled wretches, stretched on the sails, to which the fire had communicated, and who were now lying in a molten sea of flame like that described in *Pandemonium* by Milton; the yells of the Irish inside of the hut, vainly attempting to regain the door, as they writhed in their flaming apparel, which, like the shirt of Nessus, ate into their flesh; the burning



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thatch which had been precipitated in the air, and now descended in fiery flakes upon the parties outside, who stood aghast at the dreadful and unexpected catastrophe; the volumes of black and suffocating smoke which poured out from every quarter—formed a scene of horror to which no pen can do adequate justice. But all was soon over. The shrieks and yells had yielded to suffocation, and the flames, in their fury, had devoured everything with such rapidity, that they subsided for the want of further aliment. In a few minutes nothing remained but the smoking walls and the blackened corpses which they encircled.

Ill-fated wretches! ye had escaped the lightning's blast—ye had been rescued from the swallowing wave—and little thought that you would encounter an enemy more cruel still—your fellow-creature—man.

The first emotions of Seymour and his party, as soon as they had recovered from the horror which had been excited by the catastrophe, were those of pity and commiseration; but their reign was short—

Revenge impatient rose,  
And threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down.

The smoking ruins formed the altar at which he received their vows, and stimulated them to the sacrifice of further victims. Nor did he fail to inspire the breasts of the other party, indignant at the loss of their companions, and disappointed at the destruction of what they so ardently coveted.

Debriseau, who had played no idle game in the previous skirmish, was the first who rushed to the attack. Crying out, with all the theatrical air of a Frenchman, which never deserts him, even in the agony of grief, "*Mes braves compagnons, vous serez vengés!*" he flew at M'Dermot, the leader of the Irish savages.

A brand of half-consumed wood, with which he aimed at M'Dermot's head, broke across the bludgeon which was raised to ward the blow. Debriseau closed; and clasping his arms round his neck, tore him with his strong teeth with the power and ferocity of a tiger, and they rolled together in the dust, covered with the blood which poured in streams, and struggling for mastery and life. An American, one of the *Aspasia's* crew,

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now closed in the same way with another of the Irish desperadoes, and as they fell together, twirling the side-locks on the temples of his antagonist round his fingers to obtain a fulcrum to his lever, he inserted his thumbs into the sockets of his eyes, forced out the balls of vision, and left him in agony and in darkness.

"The sword of the Lord!" roared the boatswain, as he fractured the skull of a third with the mast of the boat, which with herculean force he now whirled round his head.

"Fight, *Aspasias*—you fight for your lives," cried Seymour, who was everywhere in advance, darting the still burning end of the large spar into the faces of his antagonists, who recoiled with suffocation and pain. It was, indeed, a struggle for life; the rage of each had mounted to delirium. The English sailors, stimulated by the passions of the moment, felt neither pain nor fatigue from their previous sufferings. The want of weapons had been supplied by their clasp knives, to which the Irish had also resorted, and deadly wounds were given and received.

M'Dermot, the Irish leader, had just gained the mastery of Debriseau, bestriding his body and strangling him, with his fingers so fixed in his throat that they seemed deeply to have entered into the flesh. The Guernsey man was black in the face, and his eyes starting from their sockets; in a few minutes he would have been no more, when the mast in the hands of the boatswain descended upon the Irishman's head, and dashed out his brains. At the same moment one of the Irishmen darted his knife into the side of Seymour, who fell, streaming with his own blood. The fate of their officer, which excited the attention of the seamen, and the fall of M'Dermot, on the opposite side, to whose assistance the Irish immediately hastened, added to the suspension of their powers from want of breath, produced a temporary cessation of hostilities. Dragging away their killed and wounded, the panting antagonists retreated to the distance of a few yards from each other, tired, but not satisfied with their revenge, and fully intending to resume the strife as soon as they had recovered the power. But a very few seconds had elapsed, when they were interrupted by a third party; and the clattering of horses' hoofs was immediately followed by the appearance of

## THE KING'S OWN

a female on horseback, who, galloping past the Irishmen, reined up her steed, throwing him on his haunches, in his full career, in the space between the late contending parties.

"'Tis the daughter of the House!" exclaimed the Irishmen in consternation.

There wanted no such contrast as the scene described to add lustre to her beauty, or to enhance her charms. Fair as the snow-drift, her cheeks mantling with the roseate blush of exercise and animation; her glossy hair, partly uncurled, and still played with by the amorous breeze, hanging in long ringlets down her neck; her eye, which alternately beamed with pity or flashed with indignation, as it was directed to one side or the other; her symmetry of form, which the close riding-dress displayed; her graceful movements, as she occasionally restrained her grey palfrey, who fretted to resume his speed—all combined with her sudden and unexpected appearance to induce the boatswain and his men to consider her as superhuman.

"She's an angel of light!" muttered the boatswain to himself.

She turned to the Irish, and in an energetic tone addressed them in their own dialect. What she had said was unknown to the English party, but the effect which her language produced was immediate. Their weapons were thrown aside, and they hung down their heads in confusion. They made an attempt to walk away, but a few words from her induced them to remain.

The fair equestrian was now joined by two more, whose pace had not been so rapid; and the boatswain, who had been contemplating her with astonishment as she was addressing the Irish, now that she was about to turn towards him recollected that some of his men were not exactly in a costume to meet a lady's eye. He raised his call to his mouth, and with a sonorous whistle cried out, "All you without trousers behind shealing, hoy!" an order immediately obeyed by the men who had been deprived of their habiliments.

Conolly, who had understood the conversation which had taken place, called out in Irish, at the same time as he walked round behind the walls, "I think ye'll be after giving us our

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duds now, ye dirty spalpeens, so bring 'um wid you quick;" a request which was immediately complied with, the clothes being collected by two of the Irish, and taken to the men who had retired behind the walls of the shealing.

Mr. Hardsett was not long in replying to her interrogations, and in giving her an outline of the tragical events which had occurred, while the ladies, trembling with pity and emotion, listened to the painful narrative.

"Are you the only officer, then, of the frigate that is left?"

"No, madam," replied the boatswain; "the third lieutenant is here; but there he lies, poor fellow, desperately wounded by these men, from whom we expected to have had relief."

"What was the name of your frigate?"

"The *Aspasia*, Captain M——."

"O Heaven!" cried the girl, catching at the collar of the boatswain's coat in her trepidation.

"And the wounded officer's name?"

"Seymour."

A cry of anguish and horror escaped from all the party as the beautiful interrogatress tottered in her seat, and then fell off into the arms of the boatswain.

In a few seconds, recovering herself, she regained her feet.

"Quick, quick—lead me to him."

Supported by Hardsett, she tottered to the spot where Seymour lay, with his eyes closed, faint and exhausted with loss of blood, attended by Robinson and Debriseau.

She knelt down by his side, and taking his hand, which she pressed between her own, called him by his name.

Seymour started at the sound of the voice, opened his eyes, and in the beauteous form which was reclining over him beheld his dear, dear Emily.

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER LVII

Ah me ! what perils do environ  
The man that meddles with cold iron ;  
What plaguy mischiefs and mishaps  
To dog him still with after-claps.

*Hudibras.*

THE melancholy loss of lives which we have detailed, occurred upon a reef of rocks close to Cape —, on the coast of Galway, and not four miles from the castle and property held by Mr. Rainscourt. The intelligence had been communicated to M'Elvina by some of his tenants early in the morning of the day on which the survivors had gained the shore. The western gales, sweeping the Atlantic, and blowing with such fury on the coast, would not permit any vegetation or culture so near the beach ; but when once past the range of hills which exposed their rugged sides as barriers to the blast, the land was of good quality, and thickly tenanted. The people were barbarous to an excess, and as they had stated, claimed a traditionary right to whatever property might be thrown up from the numerous wrecks which took place upon the dangerous and iron-bound coast. This will account for the tragical events of the day.

When M'Elvina was informed of vessels having been stranded, he immediately went up to the castle to procure the means of assistance, which were always held there in readiness, and as many of Rainscourt's people as could be collected. This, however, required some little delay ; and Emily, shocked at the imperfect intelligence which had been conveyed to her, determined to ride down immediately, in company with Mrs. M'Elvina and a young friend who was staying with her during her father's absence. On their arrival at the searange of hills, the explosion of the shealing, and subsequent conflict between the parties, met their eyes. Emily's fears and knowledge of the Irish peasantry immediately suggested the cause, and aware of her influence with the Rainscourt tenants, she made all the haste that the roads would permit to arrive at the spot, galloping down the hill in so bold

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and dexterous a style, that her companions neither could nor would have dared to keep pace with her. How fortunate was her arrival need hardly be observed, as in all probability the English seamen would eventually have been sacrificed to the cupidity and resentment of the natives.

"William, do you know me?" whispered Emily, as the tears ran down her cheeks, and her countenance betrayed the anguish of her mind.

Seymour pressed the small white hand that trembled in his own, and a faint smile illuminated his features; but the excitement at the appearance of Emily was too great—the blood again gushed from his wound, his eyes closed, and his head fell on his shoulder, as he swooned from the loss of blood.

"O God, preserve him!" cried Emily, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes to heaven, and then sinking down in mental and fervent prayer.

"My dear M'Elvina, I am so glad that you have come at last," said Susan, bursting into tears. "Look at whose side Emily is kneeling—'tis William Seymour, dying."

"Seymour!" cried M'Elvina, who had but that moment arrived; but aware of the importance of prompt assistance, he called for the basket containing the restoratives, and gently removing Emily, he took her situation by the side of our wounded hero.

To strip off his clothes, examine the wound, bandage it so as to prevent a further loss of blood, and pour down his throat some diluted wine, was the work of a few minutes. Seymour, who had only fainted, reopened his eyes, and soon showed the good effects of M'Elvina's presence of mind.

"M'Elvina—is it not?—Did not I see Emily?"

"Yes, you did, my dear fellow; but keep quiet. I do not think your wound is dangerous."

"I am better now, M'Elvina—much better; but I must see Emily."

M'Elvina thought it advisable to accede to his wish, and returned to his wife, who was supporting the fainting girl. A glass of water, the assurance that Seymour would do well if not too much agitated, and a promise exacted from her to say but little, was followed by an interview which had a reviving effect upon both.



## THE KING'S OWN

Medical practitioners, who dive into the inmost recesses of the human frame in pursuit of knowledge, and who search through the mineral and vegetable kingdom for relief, when will you produce a balm so healing, a specific so powerful, an elixir so instantaneous or restorative as—joy?

M'Elvina was in the meantime occupied in preparations for removing the wounded, and portioning out food and necessaries to the rest of the party. When he beheld the sad relics in the shealing, and heard from the boatswain the tragical events of the day, his indignation was beyond bounds. Seven Frenchmen, fifteen Englishmen, and eight Irishmen had been burnt alive; three Englishmen and five Irishmen had been killed in the affray; making, independently of many severely wounded, a total of thirty-eight who had perished on this disastrous morning.

The Irish who had attacked them were all tenants of the property belonging either to him or Rainscourt; an immediate notice to quit was given to them on the spot, and the dreadful word emigration thundered in their ears. This brought them on their knees, with such crying and beseeching, such uncouth and ridiculous gestures, as almost to create a laugh among the English seamen who were witnesses to the scene.

"Well, if them ain't funny beggars, I'll be blowed," cried one of the English seamen.

"Just the way wid 'em," observed Conolly, "all honey or all vinegar—there's never a good turn they won't do ye now. If it had not been for the 'cratur,' there wouldn't have been this blow-up."

But to continue. The bodies of the dead in the shealing were consigned to the earth as they lay, the four walls composing a mausoleum where animosity was buried. The corpses of M'Dermot and the Irish who had been killed in the conflict were removed by their friends, that they might be waked. By the direction of M'Elvina, the wounded English were carried up by their former antagonists to the small town at the foot of the castle, where surgical assistance was to be obtained. Seymour was placed on a sort of bier that had been constructed for him, Emily and her companions riding by his side; and the cavalcade wound up the hill, the rear brought up by Mr. Hardsett and the

## THE KING'S OWN

remainder of the English crew. In two hours all were at their respective destinations; and Seymour, who had been examined by the surgeon upon his arrival at the castle, and whose wound had been pronounced by no means dangerous, was in bed and fast asleep, Susan and Emily watching by his side.

Debriseau, who had recognised his quondam friend M'Elvina, and perceived by his appearance, and the respect that was shown to him, that he had been more fortunate in his career since they had parted than he had himself, from a proud feeling of the moment did not make himself known. That M'Elvina, who had no idea of meeting him in such a quarter, should not, in the hurry of the scene, distinguish his former associate, covered as he was with dust and blood, and having the appearance more of a New Zealand warrior than of any other living being, was not surprising—and Debriseau joined the English party in the rear of the cavalcade, and remained with them at the town, while M'Elvina and the rest of the cortège continued their route to the castle with the wounded Seymour.

As soon as our hero's wound had been dressed, and the favourable opinion of the surgeon had been pronounced, M'Elvina rode down to the town to make arrangements for the board and lodging of the English seamen. It was then that he was asked by Mr. Hardsett, what was to be done with the Frenchman who had been saved.

"Where is he?" demanded M'Elvina.

Debriseau was summoned to the magistrate, and having cleaned himself of the dust and gore, was immediately recognised.

"Debriseau!" exclaimed M'Elvina, with astonishment and a look of displeasure.

"Even so, Captain M'Elvina," replied Debriseau haughtily; "you do not seem very well pleased at meeting an old acquaintance."

"Captain Debriseau, will you do me the favour to step on one side with me. I will 'be honest' with you," continued M'Elvina to the Guernseyman, when they were out of hearing of the boatswain and the rest, "and confess that, although I wish you well, I was not pleased at meeting with you here. You addressed me as Captain M'Elvina—that title has long

## THE KING'S OWN

been dropped. I did once confide to you the secret of my former life, and will own, what I little imagined at the time, that I have in consequence put it into your power to do me serious injury. You must now listen to me, while I give you a sketch of my memoirs from the time that we parted at Cherbourg."

M'Elvina then entered into a short history of what the reader is acquainted with. "Judge, then, Debriseau," pursued he, "if, after what has passed, I could 'honestly' say that I was glad to see you—who not only, by your presence, reminded me of my former irregularities, but had the means, if you thought proper, of acquainting my friends and acquaintances with what I wish I could forget myself."

"Captain—I beg your pardon—Mr. M'Elvina," replied Debriseau, with dignity, "I will be as honest as you. I am here without a sous, and without a shirt, and when I leave this, I know not where to lay my hand upon either; but rather than betray a confidence reposed in me, rather than injure one who always was my friend, or, what is still more unworthy, attempt to work upon your fears to my own advantage, I would suffer death, nay, more—*Sacristie*—I would sooner turn custom-house officer. No, no, M'Elvina—*Je suis Français, moi*—bah, I mean I am a true Englishman. Never mind what I am—all countries are alike, if a man's heart is in the right place. I sincerely wish you joy of your good fortune, and know nobody that in my opinion deserves it more. I shall go to prison with some resignation now that I know you have been so fortunate; and do me not the injustice to imagine that you will ever be troubled by either seeing or hearing from me."

"I waited for this answer, Debriseau: had you made any other, I would have run the risk and defied you; nothing would have induced me to have offered to bribe your silence. But I rejoice in your honest and manly conduct—'Honesty is the best policy,' Debriseau. I can now offer, and you can accept, without blushing on either side, that assistance which I have both the power and will to grant. There is no occasion for your going to prison. I make the returns as magistrate, and as you are an English subject, will be answerable for the omission. We are too far from the world here to have any questions asked. And now let me know

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how I can be of any service to you, for my purse and interest you may command."

"Well, then, to tell you the truth, I am fit for nothing on shore. I must have another vessel, if I can get one."

"Not a smuggling vessel, I hope," replied M<sup>c</sup>Elvina gravely.

"I should prefer it certainly. Why, there's no harm in smuggling, if I recollect your arguments right," replied Debriseau, smiling. "Do you remember the night that you convinced me?"

"I do, very well," said M<sup>c</sup>Elvina; "but I have reconsidered the subject, and I have one little remark to make, which will upset the whole theory; which is, that other people acting wrong cannot be urged as an excuse for our own conduct. If it were, the world would soon be left without virtue or honesty. You may think me scrupulous; but I am sincere. Cannot you hit upon something else?"

"Why, I should have no objection to command a fine merchant vessel, if I could obtain such a thing."

"That you shall," replied M<sup>c</sup>Elvina; "and to make sure of it, and render you more independent, you shall be part owner. Consider it as *une affaire arrangée*. And now allow me to offer you the means of improving your personal appearance—I presume the leathern bag is empty?"

"Bah! a long while ago After I had lost my vessel, I made up to Mademoiselle Picardon; I thought it would not be a bad speculation—but she never forgave me kicking that dirty puppy downstairs—little beast!"

"Ah! you forget some of my remarks," replied M<sup>c</sup>Elvina, laughing—"‘Love me, love my dog.’ Now oblige me by accepting this; and, Debriseau (excuse me), there's a capital barber in this street. *Au revoir*."

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER LVIII

Under his lordship's leave, all must be mine.

MIDDLETON.

**T**HE first moments of leisure that M'Elvina could obtain from his duties were employed in writing to the vicar, informing him of the reappearance of Seymour under such peculiar circumstances, and requesting his immediate presence, that our hero's claims to the property of Admiral de Courcy might be established. As before observed, Rainscourt was not at the castle, nor was he expected for some days, having accepted an invitation to join a shooting party some miles distant. A letter was despatched to him by his daughter, detailing the circumstances of the shipwreck, stating that the wounded officer was in the castle, and that, in consequence, until his return Mrs. M'Elvina would remain as her companion.

Although the wound that Seymour had received had been pronounced by the surgeon not to be of a dangerous tendency, still he did not recover so rapidly as might have been expected from his youth and excellent constitution. The fact was, that all his love for Emily, who was constantly at his side, and could not conceal her regard for him, had returned with tenfold violence. The same honourable principle which had before decided him—that of not taking advantage of her prepossession in his favour, and permitting her to throw away herself and her large fortune upon one of unknown parentage and penniless condition—militated against his passion, and caused such a tumult of contending feelings, as could not but affect a person in his weak state. A slow fever came on, which retarded the cure, and even threatened more serious consequences.

Madame de Staël has truly observed, that love occupies the whole life of a woman. It is not therefore surprising that women should be more skilful in detecting the symptoms of it in others. Mrs. M'Elvina, with the usual penetration of her sex, discovered what was passing in the mind of Seymour, and communicated her suspicions to her husband.

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As for some days the health of our hero rather declined than improved, M'Elvina determined to entrust him with the secret of his birth, which, by removing all difficulties, he imagined would produce a beneficial effect. But there was one point which M'Elvina could not conceal from our hero, which was the melancholy fact of his father having, under an assumed name, fallen a sacrifice to the offended laws of his country; and the knowledge of this had so serious an effect upon Seymour, as almost to neutralise the joy arising from the rest of the communication. The first question which he asked himself was, whether Emily would or ought to marry a man whose father had perished by so ignominious a death; and now that all other impediments to his making her an offer of his hand were removed, whether that circumstance alone would not be an insuperable bar to their union. Agitated by these conflicting doubts, Seymour passed a sleepless night, and on the ensuing morning his fever had alarmingly increased. This was observed by the surgeon, who stated that he could not account for it, except by supposing that there was something heavy on the mind of his patient, which, unless removed, would retard, if not prevent, recovery.

Susan, who with her husband had imagined that the disclosure which had taken place would have had a beneficial effect, hastened to the sick-chamber, and soon persuaded our hero to make her a confidante of his doubts and fears. "There is but one who can satisfy you on that point, my dear William," replied she; "for although I feel convinced that I can answer for her, it is not exactly a case of proxy—M'Elvina will be here directly, and then I will obtain his permission to disclose the whole to Emily, and you will have the answer from her own lips."

In the course of the forenoon Emily was made acquainted with the eventful history of our hero's birth and parentage, of her no longer being an heiress, of his ardent love for her, and of the fears that he entertained upon the subject.

"I am only sorry for one thing," replied Emily, "that he did not ask me to marry him when I thought that I was an heiress; now, if I accept him, I am afraid it may be thought—oh, if you knew how I have loved him, how I have thought



## THE KING'S OWN

of him when far away," cried the sobbing girl, "you would not—no one would think me capable of interested motives.—I am so glad the property is his," continued Emily, looking up, and smiling through her tears.

"Why, my dear Emily, if you begin to make difficulties, we shall be worse than ever. There never was a more fortunate occurrence than this attachment between you and Seymour. It reconciles all difficulties, puts an end to all Chancery suits, and will shower general happiness, when some at least must have been made miserable. Come with me—William is very feverish this morning: you only can do him good."

Mrs. McElvina led the agitated girl into the sick-chamber, and whispering to Seymour that Emily knew all, and that all was well, was so very imprudent as to allow her feelings to overcome her sense of chaperonism, and left them together.

I am aware that I now have a fair opportunity of inserting a most interesting conversation, full of ohs and ahs, dears and sweets, &c., which would be much relished by all misses of seventeen or thereabouts; but as I do not write novels for them, and the young couple have no secrets to which the reader is not already a party, I shall leave them to imagine the explanation, with all its concomitant retrospections and anticipations, softened with tears and sweetened with kisses; and as the plot now thickens, change the scene to the dressing-room of Rainscourt, who had now just risen at his usual hour, viz., between two and three in the afternoon. His French valet is in attendance shaving him and dressing his hair, and communicating what little intelligence he has been enabled to collect for his master's amusement.

"Monsieur has not seen the young officer who was wounded?"

"No; I wonder why they brought him up here. What sort of a person is he?"

"*C'est un joli garçon, monsieur, avec l'air bien distingué.*—I carried in the water this morning when his wound was dressed, for I had the curiosity to see him—*c'est un diable de blessure*—and the young officer has a very singular mark on his right shoulder, like—*comment l'appellez-vous?—pied du corbeau.*"

## THE KING'S OWN

Rainscourt started under the operation of the razor; he remembered the mark of the grandchild, so minutely described by the vicar.

"*Pardon, monsieur, ce n'est pas ma faute,*" said the valet, applying a napkin to stanch the blood which flowed from his master's cheek.

"It was not," replied Rainscourt, recovering himself; "I had a slight spasm."

The operation was continued, and fortunately had just been finished when the valet resumed—" *Et rappelez-vous Monsieur le Vicaire de ——. Il est arrivé hier au soir,* on a visit to Mr. M'Elvina."

"The devil he is!" replied Rainscourt, springing from his chair at the corroborating incident to his previous ground of alarm.

The astonished countenance of the valet restored the master to his senses. "Bring me my coffee—I am nervous this morning."

But Rainscourt had not long to endure suspense. He had barely finished his toilet, when he was informed that the vicar, M'Elvina, and some other gentlemen were below, and wished to speak to him. Rainscourt, anxious to know the worst, descended to the library, where he found the parties before mentioned accompanied by Debriseau and a legal gentleman. We shall not enter into details. To the dismay of Rainscourt, the identity of our hero was established beyond all doubt, and he felt convinced that eventually he should be forced to surrender up the property. His indignation was chiefly levelled at M'Elvina, whom he considered as the occasion of the whole, not only from having rescued our hero from the wreck, but because it was by his assertions, corroborated by Debriseau, that the chain of evidence was clearly substantiated. M'Elvina, who from long acquaintance had a feeling towards Rainscourt which his conduct did not deserve, waited only for his acknowledgment of our hero's claim to communicate the circumstance of the attachment between the young people, which would have barred all further proceedings, and have settled it in an amicable arrangement.

"Well, gentlemen," observed Rainscourt, "if you can satisfactorily prove in a court of justice all you have now

## THE KING'S OWN

stated, I shall of course bow to its decision; but you must excuse me if, out of regard to my daughter, I resist until the assertions can be substantiated on oath. You cannot expect otherwise."

"We do not expect otherwise, Mr. Rainscourt," replied M'Elvina; "but we think it will not be necessary that it should go into court."

"Mr. M'Elvina," interrupted Rainscourt angrily, "I wish no observations from you. After your intimacy with the family, particularly with my daughter, who, by your means, will probably forfeit all her prospects, I consider your conduct base and treacherous. You'll excuse my ringing the bell for the servant to show you the door."

M'Elvina turned pale with rage. "Then, sir, you shall have no suggestions from me. Come, gentlemen, we will retire," continued M'Elvina, now determined that Rainscourt should be left in ignorance for the present; and the parties quitted the room, little contemplating that such direful consequences would ensue from this trifling altercation.

## CHAPTER LIX

Was there ever seen such villainy,  
So neatly plotted, and so well performed,  
Both held in hand, and flatly both beguiled?

*Jew of Malta.*

**T**HE feelings of Rainscourt were worked up to desperation and madness. As soon as the party had quitted the room, he paced up and down, clenching his fists and throwing them in the air, as his blood boiled against M'Elvina, whom he considered as his mortal enemy. To send him a challenge, with the double view of removing him and his testimony and at the same time of glutting his own revenge, was the idea that floated uppermost in his confused and heated brain. To surrender up the estates; to be liable for the personal property which he had squandered; to sink at once from affluence to absolute pauperism, if not to incarceration—it was impossible. He continued his rapid movement to and

## THE KING'S OWN

fro, dividing his thoughts between<sup>\*</sup> revenge and suicide, when a tap at the door roused him from his gloomy reveries. It was the surgeon who attended Seymour; he came to pay his respects, and make a report of his patient's health to Rainscourt, whom he had not seen since his return to the castle.

"Your most obedient, sir. I am sorry that my patient was not so well when I saw him this morning. I hope to find him better when I go upstairs."

"Oh!" replied Rainscourt, a faint gleam of deliverance from his dilemmas shining upon his dark and troubled mind.

"Yes, indeed," replied the medical gentleman, who, like many others, made the most of his cases to enhance the value of his services; like Tom Thumb, who "made the giants first, and then killed them"—"a great deal of fever, indeed; I do not like the symptoms. But we must see what we can do."

"Do you think that there is any chance of his *not* recovering?" asked Rainscourt, with emphasis.

"It's hard to say, sir; many much worse have recovered, and many not so ill have been taken off. If the fever abates, all will go well; if it does not, we must hope for the best," replied the surgeon, shrugging up his shoulders.

"Then he might die of the wound, and fever attending it?"

"Most certainly he might. He might be carried off in twenty-four hours."

"Thank you for your visit, Mr. B——," replied Rainscourt, who did not wish for his further company. "Good morning."

"Good morning, sir," replied the surgeon, as Rainscourt politely bowed him out of the room.

Rainscourt again paced up and down. "He might die of this fever and wound in twenty-four hours. There could be nothing surprising in it;" and as he cogitated, the demon entered his soul. He sat down and pressed his hands to his burning temples, as he rested his elbows on the table many minutes, perplexed in a chaotic labyrinth of evil thoughts, till the fiend pointed out the path which must be pursued.

## THE KING'S OWN

He summoned the old nurse. Those who have lived in, or are acquainted with the peculiarities and customs of, the sister kingdom, must know that the attachment of the lower Irish to their masters amounts to almost self-devotion. Norah had nursed Rainscourt at her breast, and remaining in the family, had presided over the cradle of Emily; adhering to Rainscourt in his poverty, and now, in the winter of her days, basking in the sun of his prosperity.

"The blessings of the day upon the master," said the old woman, as she entered.

Rainscourt locked the door. "Norah," said he, "I have bad news to tell you. Are you aware that the castle is no longer mine?"

"The castle no longer yours! Och hone," replied the old woman, opening her eyes wide with astonishment.

"That I am a beggar, and shall be sent to prison?"

"The master to prison—Och hone!"

"That my daughter is no longer an heiress, but without a shilling?"

"The beautiful child without a shilling—Och hone!"

"That you will have to leave—be turned out of the castle?"

"Me turned out of the castle—Och hone!"

"Yes, Norah, all this will take place in a few days."

"And who will do it?"

"Why, the young man upstairs, whose life we are saving. So much for gratitude."

"Gratitude! Och hone—and so young—and so beautiful, too, as he is."

"But he may die, Norah."

"Sure enough he may die," replied the old woman, brightening up at the idea. "It's a bad fever that's on him."

"And he may recover, Norah."

"Sure enough he may recover," replied she mournfully; "he's but young blood."

"Now, Norah, do you love your master? do you love your young mistress?"

"Do I love the master and the mistress?" replied the old woman indignantly; "and it's you that's after asking me such a question!"

## THE KING'S OWN

"Can you bear to see us turned out of house and home—to be cast on the wide world with poverty and rags? Will you permit it, when, by assisting me, you can prevent it?"

"Can I bear it? will I assist?—tell me the thing that you'd have me do, that's all."

"I said that the wounded person might die—Norah, he *must* die."

The old woman looked up earnestly at Rainscourt's face, as if to understand him. "I see!"—then remaining with her head down for some time, as if in cogitation, she again looked up. "Will Father O'Sullivan give me absolution for that?"

"He will—he shall—I will pay for ten thousand masses for your soul over and above."

"But what would you have me do—so young and so beautiful, too! I'll think over it to-night. I never sleep much now, the rats are so troublesome."

"Rats!" cried Rainscourt; "why not get some arsenic?"

"Arsenic!" echoed the old woman; "is it arsenic for the rats you mean?"

"Yes," replied Rainscourt significantly; "for all sorts of rats—those who would undermine the foundation of an ancient house."

"Sure it's an old house, that of the Rainscourts," replied the nurse; "but I'm giddy a little—I'll think a bit." In a second or two her face brightened up a little. "Why don't you marry the two together? Such a handsome couple as they'd be!"

"Marry, you old fool! Do you think, now that he is aware that all the property is his, that he would marry Emily, without a sixpence? No—no."

"True—and it's the arsenic you want, then?—And you're sure that the priest will give absolution?"

"Sure," replied Rainscourt, out of patience; "come to me at daylight to-morrow morning."

"Well, I'll think about it to-night when I'm asleep.—And so young, and so beautiful, too. Och hone!" murmured the old woman, as she unlocked the door, and with tremulous gait quitted the room.

Rainscourt, left to himself, again became the prey to conflicting passions. Although his conscience had long been



## THE KING'S OWN

proof against any remorse at the commission of the everyday crimes which stained the earth, yet it recoiled at meditated murder. More than once he determined to leave it all to chance, and if Seymour did recover, to fly the country with all the money he could raise; but the devil had possession, and was not to be cast out.

The door was again opened, and Emily, radiant with happiness after the interview with Seymour, in which she had plighted and received the troth of her beloved, entered the room.

"My dear father, Mr. Seymour is so much better this evening."

"Would he were in his grave!" replied Rainscourt bitterly.

Emily had come in at the request of Seymour to state to her father what had taken place, but his violent exclamation deterred her. She thought that it was not a favourable moment, and she retired, wishing him good-night, with no small degree of indignation expressed in her countenance at his iniquitous wish. She retired to her chamber; her anger was soon chased away by the idea that it was for her sake that her father was so irritated, and that to-morrow all would be well. Bending to her Creator in gratitude and love, and not forgetting Seymour in her orisons, she laid her head upon her pillow, and visions of future happiness filled her dreams in uninterrupted succession.

Enjoy them, beautiful and innocent one! Revel in them, if it were possible, to satiety, for they are thy last enjoyment. How much would the misery of this world be increased, if we were permitted to dive into futurity. The life of a man is a pilgrimage in error and in darkness. The *ignis fatuus* that he always pursues always deceives him; yet he is warned in vain—at the moment of disappointment, he resolves, sees another, and pursues again. The fruit is turned to ashes in his mouth at the fancied moment of enjoyment—warning succeeds warning—disappointment is followed up by disappointment—every grey hair in his head may be considered as a sad memento of dear-bought yet useless experience—still he continues, spurred on by Hope, anticipating everything, in pursuit of nothing, until he stumbles into his grave, and all is over.

## THE KING'S OWN

Little did M'Elvina and the vicar think what the consequences would be of their leaving Rainscourt in his wrath. Little did Rainscourt and the nurse imagine how dreadful and how futile would be the results of their wicked intentions. Little did the enamoured and guileless pair, who now slumbered in anticipated bliss, contemplate what, in the never-ceasing parturition of time, the morrow would bring forth.

Early in the morning, Rainscourt, who was awake, and who had not taken off his clothes, was startled by a low tapping at his door. It was the nurse.

"Well," said Rainscourt hastily, "have you procured what we were talking of?"

"I have indeed; but——"

"No buts, Norah, or we part for ever. Where is it? Who is with him?"

"One of the women. I tould her I would nurse him after daylight."

"When does he take his fever draughts?"

"Every two hours—Och hone, he'll take but one more. So young, and so beautiful, too."

"Silence, fool; go and send the other woman to bed, and then bring in one of the draughts."

The old nurse turned back as she was hobbling away—

"And the absolution?"

"Away, and do as I order you," cried Rainscourt, with violence.

"Blessed Jesus, don't talk so loud! It's the whole house will hear you," said the hag beseechingly, as she left the room.

She returned with the draught. Rainscourt poured in the powder, and shook it with desperation.

"Now this is the first draught he must take; give it him directly."

"Och hone!" cried the old woman, as she received the vial in her trembling hands.

"Go, and come back and tell me when he has taken it."

Norah left the room. Rainscourt waited her return in a state of mind so horribly painful, that large drops of perspiration poured from his forehead. At one moment he would have recalled her—the next beggary stared him in the face,

## THE KING'S OWN

and his diabolical resolution was confirmed. His agony of suspense became so intense, that he could wait no longer. He went to the door of the sick-chamber, and opening it gently, looked in.

The old woman was sitting down on the floor, crouched, with her elbows on her knees, and her face and head covered over with her cloak. The noise of the hinges startled her; she uncovered her head and looked up. Rainscourt made signs to her, inquiring whether he had taken the draught. She shook her head. He pointed his finger angrily, desiring her to give it. The old woman sank on her knees and held up her hands in supplication. Rainscourt beckoned her out—she followed him to his own room.

“Do you see these pistols?” said Rainscourt—“they are loaded. Immediately obey my orders—promise me, on your soul, that you will, or you shall be the occasion of your master’s death. Swear!” continued he, putting one of the pistols to his ear and his finger to the trigger.

“I will do it—on my soul I will, master dear,” cried Norah. “Only put away the pistols, and if he were thousands more beautiful, and if my soul is to be burnt for ever, I’ll do it.”

Again she returned to the chamber of the victim, followed by Rainscourt, who stood at the door to fortify her resolution.

Seymour was awoke by the old beldame—from a dream in which the form of Emily blessed his fancy—to take the fatal draught now poured out and presented to him. Accustomed to the febrifuge at certain hours, he drank it off in haste, that he might renew his dreaming happiness. “What is it? It burns my throat!” cried Seymour.

“It’s not the like of what you have taken before,” said the old woman, shuddering as she offered him some water to take the taste away.

“Thank you, nurse,” said Seymour, as he again sank on his pillow.

## THE KING'S OWN

### CHAPTER LX

*Hor.* You see he is departing.

*Corn.* Let me come to him ; give me him as he is. If he be turned to earth, let me but give him one hearty kiss, and you shall put us both into one coffin.—WEBSTER.

IT was but a few minutes after the scene described in the last chapter, that Emily awoke from her slumbers, and chid the sun for rising before her. As soon as she was dressed, she descended to inquire after the health of him whose fate was now entwined with her own. She gently opened the door of the room. The shutters were yet closed, but the sun poured his rays through the chinks, darting, in spite of the obstruction, a light which rendered the night-lamp useless. The curtains of the bed were closed, and all was quiet. Norah sat upon the floor, her eyes fixed upon the ceiling with wild and haggard look, and as she passed the beads which she was telling from one finger to the other (her lips in rapid and convulsive motion, but uttering no sound), it appeared as if she thought the remnant of her life too short for the prayers which she had to offer to the throne above.

Emily, having in vain attempted to catch her eye, and fearful of waking Seymour, tripped gently across, and pushed the nurse by the shoulder, beckoning her out of the chamber. Norah followed her mistress into an opposite room, when Emily, who had been alarmed by the behaviour of the old woman, spoke in a low and hurried tone. "Good heavens, what is the matter, Norah? You look so dreadful. Is he worse?"

"Och hone!" said the nurse, her thoughts evidently wandering.

"Tell me, nurse—answer me, is he worse?"

"I don't know," replied Norah; "the doctor will tell."

"O God, he's worse—I'm sure he is," cried Emily, bursting into tears. "What will become of me if my dear, dear Seymour—"

"Your dear Seymour?" cried the startled Norah.

"Yes, my dear Seymour. I did not tell you—I love him,

## THE KING'S OWN

nurse—he loves me—we have plighted our troth ; and if he dies, what will become of me ? ” continued the sobbing girl.

“ Och hone ! and is it the truth, and the real truth, that you’re telling me, and *was* he to be your husband ? ”

“ *Was* he !—he *is*, Norah. What did you mean by *was* he ? ” cried Emily, in hurried accents, seizing the old woman by the wrist, with a look of fearful anxiety.

“ Did I say, was he ? I did, sure enough, and it’s true too. I thought to do my darling a service, and I cared little for my own soul. So young, and so beautiful, too. And it’s a nice pair ye would have made. And it’s I that have kilt him ! Och hone ! ” cried Norah, wringing her withered hands.

“ Killed him, Norah ! What have you done ?—tell me directly,” screamed Emily, shaking the old hag with all her force. “ Quick ! ”

The old nurse seemed to have all the violence of her mistress’s feelings communicated to her as she cried out, with a face of horror, “ It was all for ye that I did it. It’s the master that made me do it. He said my darling would be a beggar. It’s the poison for the rats he’s taken. Och, och hone ! ” and the old woman sank on the floor, covering up her head, while Emily flew shrieking out of the room.

When M’Elvina and his party quitted the castle, they returned to M’Elvina’s house. “ I cannot but pity Mr. Rainscourt,” observed the vicar ; “ indeed, I wish that, notwithstanding his violence, we had not quitted him without making the communication.”

“ So do I,” replied M’Elvina ; “ but the injustice of his accusation prevented me ; and I must confess that I have some pleasure in allowing him to remain twenty-four hours in suspense—longer than that, not even my revenge has stomach for.”

“ I am afraid,” observed Debriseau, “ that we have done unwisely. The violence and selfishness of the man’s character are but too well known, and Seymour is in his power.”

“ Do not be so uncharitable, sir,” replied the vicar gravely. “ Mr. Rainscourt, with all his faults, is incapable of anything so base as what you have hinted at.”

“ I trust I have done him injustice,” replied Debriseau ; “ but I saw that in his eye, during the interview, which chilled my blood when I thought of your young friend.”

## THE KING'S OWN

"At all events, when I go up to-morrow morning to see how Seymour is, I think it will be right to inform Mr. Rainscourt of the facts. I shall be there by daylight. Will you accompany me, sir?" said M'Elvina to the vicar.

"With pleasure," replied the other; and from this arrangement the vicar and M'Elvina were at the castle, and had sent their cards in to Mr. Rainscourt at the very time that Emily had beckoned the old nurse out of the chamber.

As long as the deed still remained to be done, the conflict between the conscience and the evil intentions of Rainscourt had been dreadful; but now that it was done, now that the Rubicon had been passed, to listen to the dictates of conscience was useless; and worn-out as it had been in the struggle, and further soothed by the anticipation of continued prosperity, it no longer had the power to goad him. In short, conscience for the time had been overcome, and Rainscourt enjoyed after the tempest a hollow and deceitful calm, which he vainly hoped would be continued.

When M'Elvina and the vicar were announced, he thought it prudent to receive them. The bottle of brandy, to which he had made frequent applications during the morning, was removed; and having paid some slight attention to his person, he requested that they would walk up into his dressing-room. When they entered, the violence of the preceding day was no longer to be perceived in his countenance, which wore the appearance of mental suffering. The consciousness of guilt was mistaken for humility, and the feelings of both M'Elvina and the vicar were kindly influenced towards Rainscourt.

"Mr. Rainscourt," said the former, "we pay you this early visit that we may have the pleasure of relieving your mind from a weight which it is but too evident presses heavily upon it. We think, when you hear what we have to impart, you will agree with us, that there will be no occasion for litigation or ill-will. Mr. Seymour and your daughter have repeatedly met before this, and have long been attached to each other; and although Mr. Seymour was too honourable to make your daughter an offer at the time that he was friendless and unknown, yet



## THE KING'S OWN

the very first moment after he became acquainted with the change in his circumstances he made a proposal, and was accepted. I presume there can be no objections to the match; and allow us, therefore, to congratulate you upon so fortunate a termination of a very unpleasant business."

Rainscourt heard it all—it rang in his ears—it was torture, horrible torture. When they thought that his eye would beam with delight, it turned glassy and fixed; when they thought that his features would be illumined with smiles, they were distorted with agony; when they thought that his hands would be extended to seize theirs, offered in congratulation, they were clenched with the rigidity of muscle of the drowning man.

The vicar and M'Elvina looked at him and each other in dismay; but their astonishment was not to last. The door burst open, and the frantic and shrieking Emily flew into the room, exclaiming, "They have murdered him! O God! they have poisoned him. My father—my father—how could you do it?" continued the girl, as she sank without animation on the floor.

The vicar, whose brain reeled at the dreadful intelligence, had scarcely power to move to the assistance of Emily; while M'Elvina, whose feelings of horror were mingled with indignation, roughly seized Rainscourt by the collar, and detained him his prisoner.

"I am so," calmly replied Rainscourt, who, stunned by the condition of his daughter, the futility and blindness of his measures, and the unexpected promulgation of his guilt, offered no resistance. "Had you made your communication yesterday, sir, this would not have happened. I surrender myself up to justice. You have no objection to my retiring a few minutes to my bedroom, till the officers come—I have papers to arrange?"

M'Elvina acceded; and Rainscourt, bowing low for the attention, went into the adjoining room and closed the door. A few seconds had but elapsed when the report of a pistol was heard. M'Elvina rushed in, and found Rainscourt dead upon the floor, the gorgeous tapestry besprinkled with the blood and brains of the murderer and the suicide.

One more scene and all is over. Draw up the curtain, and behold the chamber in which, but the evening before,

## THE KING'S OWN

two souls, as pure as ever spurned the earth and flew to heaven—two forms, perfect as ever Nature moulded in her happiest mood—two hearts, that beat responsive without one stain of self—two hands, that plighted troth, and vowed and meant to love and cherish, with all that this world could offer in possession—health, wealth, power of intellect and cultivated minds—Joy and Love hand in hand smiling on the present—Hope, with her gilded wand, pointing to futurity—all vanished! And in their place, standing like funeral mourners, at each corner of the bed, Misery—Despair—Agony—and Death!—Woe, woe, too great for utterance—all is as silent, as horribly silent, as the grave yawning for its victim.

M'Elvina and Susan are supporting the sufferer in his last agonies; and as he writhes, and his beseeching eyes are turned towards them, supply the water, which but for a moment damps the raging fire within.

The surgeon has retired from his useless and painful task—habituated to death, but not to such a scene as this.

The vicar, anxious to administer religious balm, knows that in excruciating torture his endeavours would be vain, and the tears roll down his cheeks as he turns away from a sight which his kind heart will not allow him to behold.

Emily is on her knees, holding Seymour's hand, which even in his agony he attempts not to remove. Her face is lying down upon it, that she may not behold his sufferings. She speaks not—moves not—weeps not—all is calm—deceitful calm—her heart is broken!

And there he lies—"the young, the beautiful, the brave" in one short hour to be

"A thing

O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing."



THE PIRATE. THE THREE CUTTERS



## INTRODUCTION

SO prolific a writer as Captain Marryat must needs be a little unequal, and even his most fervent admirers would probably admit that in "The Pirate" and "The Three Cutters" he falls very far below the level of "Midshipman Easy." Careless as he shows himself at all times in construction, and indifferent as to the methods whereby he gets his heroes on to the high sea and into the track of desperate adventures, he does not often make such unblushing use of the doctrine of coincidence as in the first of the two stories presented here together. Possibly readers sixty years since were more credulous and less sophisticated. It would be difficult now to find a similar instance of this method of treatment, unless, perhaps, in the hardiest of Christmas Annuals; even the voracious appetite of the fourth form schoolboy would, we fear, reject such simple fare, and probably not unjustly describe its successor as "rot." For "The Three Cutters" is farce pure and simple, and "The Pirate," perhaps, finds its closest modern parallel in the contemporary comic opera. Where else are we likely to find twin babies lost at sea, and saved to become, one a lieutenant in his Majesty's Navy, and the other the supposed son of a pirate captain, seeking each his fortune upon one of a pair of twin-built schooners, the *Enterprise*, of his Majesty's service, and the *Avenger*, sailing under the redoubtable black flag? It only requires a few



## INTRODUCTION

for the suggestive allusion, we incline to the incongruous juxtaposition, and who shall judge of the respective merits of the old and new humour?

“The Three Cutters” needs little introduction, and probably at no time aroused any very keen interest. It affords Captain Marryat an opportunity of eulogising yachting as a pastime, and delivering his soul of certain sentiments not wholly adverse to smuggling. For the rest, the fortunes of the yacht, the smuggling schooner, and the revenue cutter yield but a mild degree of entertainment; and though the gentleman smuggler, dressed in the clothes of the noble lord, wins the heart of the fastidious widow, it must be confessed that to modern readers he does not appear a very romantic or heroic figure.

W. L. C.

*December 1896.*

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MEMOIR  
OF  
CAPTAIN FREDERICK MARRYAT  
R.N., C.B., F.R.S., F.L.S.  
AND CHEVALIER OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR

FREDERICK MARRYAT was born 10th July 1792, in London. He was second son of the late Joseph Marryat, Esq., of Wimbledon House, Surrey, an eminent West India merchant, M.P. for Sandwich, and Colonial Agent for the island of Grenada, by Charlotte, third daughter of the late Fred. Geyer, Esq., a distinguished American loyalist, who suffered severely from the steadiness of his attachment to the cause of Great Britain during the struggle with her revolted colonies.

The family trace their descent from Le Sieur Thos. Marriatte, a Protestant native of Normandy, and an officer in the Huguenot army (under Admiral Coligny), who having escaped the massacre of St. Bartholomew, 24th August 1572, fled to England with the loss of all his property.

The subject of our memoir, having acquired the rudiments of education at an academy in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis, was sent to a classical school at Ponder's End, kept by a Mr. Freeman. It is to be hoped that the discipline of the school described by the hero of his earliest novel, is no true picture of the treatment he experienced at Ponder's End; but the following anecdote suggests that whatever

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punishments may have been in course of infliction at that seat of learning, he was likely to have come in for his due share of them. The master, coming into the school one day, saw young Marryat standing upon his head. Surprised at this reversal of the ordinary practice of mortals, he inquired the reason of it, when the lad with audacious readiness replied, "I had been trying for three hours to learn my lesson on my feet, but I couldn't; so I thought I'd try whether I couldn't learn it on my head." There is no reason to doubt him when he says, "Superior in capacity to most of my school-fellows, I seldom took the pains to learn my lesson previous to going up with my class. I was too proud not to keep pace with my equals, and too idle to do more." But he acknowledges that besides "a little Latin and less Greek," he made some proficiency in mathematics and algebra.

Withdrawn from this school, he was placed with a teacher of mathematics in London, under whose tuition he remained a year, and on the 23rd September 1806, he entered the navy as a midshipman on board the *Impérieuse*, forty-four guns, commanded by the illustrious Lord Cochrane. During his service under this gallant officer, which lasted till the 18th October 1809, he took part in more than fifty engagements, in which many ships of war and merchantmen were cut out, off the coast of France and in the Mediterranean.

Having chased a ship into the Bay of Arcupon, which sought safety under a battery, Lord Cochrane resolved to cut her out, and young Marryat was one of the boarding party. He followed closely the first lieutenant who headed the expedition, and who at length, after his party had sustained a severe loss, succeeded in gaining the deck of the enemy. He had scarcely done so when, struck by thirteen musket balls, he fell back a corpse, knocking down his follower in his fall, who was trampled on and almost suffocated by his shipmates, who, burning to revenge their leader, rushed forward with impetuous bravery.

The vessel captured, an examination took place of the

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bodies of the killed and wounded. Marryat was numbered among the former, and being in a state of stupor, was unable to deny the doom assigned to him. But soon arrived the surgeon and his assistants, and with them came a midshipman who bore no good will to Marryat. This worthy youth, seeing the supposed lifeless body of his comrade, gave it a slight kick, saying, "Here is a young cock that has done crowing! Well, for a wonder, this chap has cheated the gallows!" This salutation, with its comment, revived the almost expiring energies of the other, who faintly exclaimed, "You are a liar!" a retort which, notwithstanding the melancholy scene around, produced a roar of laughter.

Shortly after this he was engaged in a rather "untoward" enterprise. His ship fell in with a vessel of suspicious appearance. It was under French colours, which it soon hauled down, showing no others, and threatening to fire into the English ship if it attempted to board her. Upon this she was boarded and taken, with a loss of twenty-six killed and wounded on her side, and of sixteen on ours; and not till then was it discovered that she was a Maltese privateer, and a friend, who had made a like mistake in supposing her opponent to be French. After this unfortunate mistake the *Impérieuse* proceeded to Malta.

It was while lying in this harbour that one night a midshipman—a son of the celebrated William Cobbett—fell overboard. Young Marryat jumped in after him, and held him up till a boat was lowered to their assistance. For this daring and humane act he received a certificate from Lord Cochrane.

The road from Barcelona to Gerona, which latter place was besieged by the French, had been completely commanded by them, for they had possession of the castle of Mongat. On the 31st July 1808, Marryat had a hand in the reduction and levelling of that fortress, which, together with the rock on which it stood, was blown up, and the road, being thereby filled with fragments, was rendered impassable



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to artillery without a heavy loss of men. The garrison consisted of two officers and sixty-nine men, of whom two were killed, seven wounded, and the rest taken prisoners. This proceeding greatly delayed the transmission of the enemy's stores and provisions which were designed for their operations in Catalonia; so much so, indeed, that on one occasion the French general was under the necessity of abandoning the whole of his artillery and field ammunition. During these operations Marryat was twice wounded, and he a third time sustained injury in the defence of the castle of Rosas, under Lord Cochrane. On the arrival of the *Impérieuse* in the bay, she perceived that the castle of Trinidad—the maintaining of which was essential to the preservation of the main fortress—had been so hotly bombarded by the enemy, that the British portion of the garrison had withdrawn from it. Lord Cochrane, therefore, taking with him a party of officers and seamen, amongst whom was Mr. Marryat, went on shore, and defended the fortress for some days—indeed, until the main fortress was taken, notwithstanding that the castle, by this time a complete ruin, was attacked, sword in hand, by 1200 chosen men of the enemy.

On the 30th of December following, he assisted in taking, in the harbour of Cadaques, after a short action of the enemy's batteries, two national vessels and twelve merchantmen laden with wheat for the garrison of Barcelona.

When Lord Cochrane proceeded against the boom constructed by the enemy, before he sent in the fire-ship to attack the French fleet in the Basque Roads, Mr. Marryat was in one of the explosion vessels, commanded by Captain Ury Johnson, which his lordship led for that purpose. For his gallantry on that occasion he received a certificate from Captain Johnson, who brought his services under the notice of the Admiralty, and for his whole conduct in the Mediterranean he was recommended in Lord Cochrane's despatches.

The log of the *Centaure*, 74, flag-ship of Sir Samuel Hood, attests that in September 1810, while cruising off Toulon, he

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jumped overboard and saved the life of a seaman named John Mowbray, who had fallen from the main-top; and in 1811, when on his passage to join the *Æolus*, on the American station, he leaped overboard and endeavoured to save a seaman named John Walker, but did not succeed in doing so. But we must give this incident in his own words:—"One of the fore-topmen, drawing water in the chains, fell overboard; the alarm was instantly given, and the ship hove to. I ran upon the poop, and, seeing that the man could not swim, jumped overboard to save him. The height from which I descended made me go very deep in the water, and when I arose I could perceive one of the man's hands. I swam towards him: but, O God! what was my horror, when I found myself in the midst of his blood. I comprehended in a moment that a shark had taken him, and expected that every instant my own fate would be like his. I wonder I had not sank with fear: I was nearly paralysed. The ship, which had been going six or seven miles an hour, was at some distance, and I gave myself up for gone. I had scarcely the power of reflection, and was overwhelmed with the sudden, awful, and, as I thought, certain approach of death, in its most horrible shape. In a moment I recollected myself; and I believe the actions of five years crowded into my mind in as many minutes. I prayed most fervently, and vowed amendment, if it should please God to spare me. I was nearly a mile from the ship before I was picked up; and when the boat came alongside with me, three large sharks were under the stern. These had devoured the poor sailor, and, fortunately for me, had followed the ship for more prey, and thus left me to myself."

Whilst in the *Æolus*, he jumped overboard and saved the life of a boy, for which he received a certificate from Captain Lord James Townshend; nor was this the sole testimonial of approbation accorded to him by that gallant officer. He had previously been mainly instrumental in saving the frigate from shipwreck during a tremendous hurricane off Cape

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Malabar, on the 30th September 1811. The *Æolus* was laid on her beam-ends, and her top-masts and mizen-masts had been blown over the side, when the question arose, who would be daring enough to venture aloft, and cut away the wreck of the main-topmast and the main-yard, "which was hanging up and down, with the weight of the topmast and topsail-yard resting upon it." We must let the captain tell how he conducted himself in this case of awful suspense and dismay:—"Seizing a sharp tomahawk, I made signs to the captain that I would attempt to cut away the wreck, follow me who dared. I mounted the weather-rigging: five or six hardy seamen followed me: sailors will rarely refuse to follow when they find an officer to lead the way. The jerks of the rigging had nearly thrown us overboard, or jammed us with the wreck. We were forced to embrace the shrouds with arms and legs; and anxiously, and with breathless apprehension for our lives, did the captain, officers, and crew gaze on us as we mounted, and cheered us at every stroke of the tomahawk. The danger seemed passed when we reached the catharpens, where we had foot-room. We divided our work, some took the lanyards of the topmast-rigging, I, the slings of the mainyard. The lusty blows we dealt were answered by corresponding crashes, and at length, down fell the tremendous wreck over the larboard gunwale. The ship felt instant relief; she righted, and we descended amidst the cheers and congratulations of most of our shipmates." For this heroic deed, Lord James Townshend, one of whose ship's company he had previously saved, gave him a certificate, and reported him to have "conducted himself with so much courage, intrepidity, and firmness, as to merit his warmest approbation."

When he belonged to the *Spartan*, he was put in command of a boat, and cut out the *Morning Star* and *Polly*, privateers, from Haycock's Harbour, and likewise a revenue cutter and two privateers in Little River.

Mr. Marryat obtained his promotion as lieutenant in 1812,

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and in the following year was appointed to *l'Espiègle*, Captain J. Taylor, in the West Indies. Whilst on service in this vessel, he once more risked his life to save a sailor named Jacob Small, who had fallen overboard in a heavy sea, but was unsuccessful on account of the time it required to bring the vessel to and lower a boat to assist him. Lieutenant Marryat was picked up, utterly exhausted, more than a mile and a half from *l'Espiègle*. Having burst a blood-vessel, he was left behind in the West Indies, in sick quarters, and after a time was sent home invalided.

In January 1814, he joined the *Newcastle*, 58, Captain Lord George Stuart, and led an expedition which was despatched to cut out four vessels off New Orleans. This he did with the loss of one officer and twelve men. He acquired his commander's rank in 1815, and in 1818 invented a life-boat, which was highly approved by the Royal Humane Society, and obtained their gold medal, with their warmest thanks for his services in saving human life. In the year 1822, Captain Marryat published "Suggestions for the Abolition of the Present System of Impressment in the Naval Service," in which pamphlet he pointed out the propriety of all merchant vessels carrying apprentices proportioned to their tonnage, instead of West Indiamen only, as was then the case. A few months after its appearance his Majesty's Ministers put his suggestion in force, taking the scale proposed by Captain Marryat with but little, if any, alteration.

In 1820, he commanded the *Beacon* sloop, at St. Helena, from which he exchanged into the *Roserio*, 18 guns; and in this vessel he brought home duplicate despatches, announcing the death of Napoleon. He was now actively engaged in the Preventive Service, in which he effected thirteen seizures. Captain Marryat's next appointment was in March 1823, to the *Larne*, 20 guns, in which he sailed to the East Indies, and remained there until the Burmese war in 1825. He was fully employed as senior officer of the naval forces, the order of Commodore Grant being that none should interfere with

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or supersede him. Sir Archibald Campbell, the commander-in-chief, was received on board the *Larne* at Calcutta, and Commander Marryat led the attack at Rangoon. His able, gallant, and zealous co-operation in this affair,—where he was the senior naval officer from May until the middle of September 1824, during which period he had to perform duties of no common character,—and the very important services he rendered to the East India Company as commander of an armament sent against Bassein, are detailed in an official narrative of the naval operations in Ava. Captain Marryat was often thanked for his services by the Supreme Government and other high authorities in India, every operation which he arranged or conducted having been attended with complete success; he likewise received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament in common with his brother officers, his rank alone precluding him from being individually named on that occasion. He now proceeded to Penang and Calcutta, returning to Rangoon in December 1824, and in the following February sailed with the late Sir Robert Sale, of glorious memory, on an expedition to reduce the territory of Bassein. On his return in April, having successfully performed his perilous duty, he was promoted to a death vacancy, and commanded the *Tees*, which, on her arrival in England, he paid off.

Captain Marryat commanded the *Ariadne* in the Channel and Western Islands, from November 1828 to November 1830. He was twice thanked for his services in the Burmese war by the Governor-General of India, received three letters of thanks from Sir Archibald Campbell, commander-in-chief of the forces, and was five times recommended by him. He was likewise thanked for his expedition with Sir Robert Sale, and was three times recommended and thanked by Commodore Coe. In June 1825, he received the decoration of C.B., and—an honour, a record of which must not be omitted—he was presented with a medal by that admirable institution, the Humane Society, for his daring and humane exertions to save

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the lives of so many men. That Society has not on its list a name so worthy of honour as that of Marryat.

In 1837, the captain published "A Code of Signals for the Use of Vessels employed in the Merchant Service." That admirable invention is now in use in the royal and mercantile service, not only of this country but of foreign nations. He twice received the thanks of the Shipowners' Society for it, and, the publication having been translated into French in 1840, was brought under the notice of Louis Philippe, from whom he received the gold cross of the Legion of Honour. It was also translated into Dutch and Italian.

In connection with this royal distinction we have a story to relate, which we are sorry to feel ourselves constrained to tell, because it presents our late king in a light in which it is not pleasant, and has not been customary, to regard him. William IV. had read and had been delighted with "Peter Simple." It was likely that so true and striking a picture of naval life and manners would have captivated a sailor. He expressed a wish to see the author, who was standing in an ante-room. The king came forth, and observing him, asked a gentleman in waiting who he was. The captain overheard the question, and said, addressing the gentleman, "Tell his Majesty I am Peter Simple." Upon this the king came forward and received him graciously. Some time after this his Majesty was waited upon by a distinguished member of the Government, to request permission for the captain to wear the order conferred upon him by the King of the French, and to obtain, if not further promotion, some higher distinction for one who had so long and ably served his country. The former request was granted as a matter of course; and as to the latter, the king said, "You best know his services; give him what you please." The Minister was about to retire, when his Majesty called him back. "Marryat! Marryat! by-the-bye, is not that the man who wrote a book against the impressment of seamen?" "The same, your



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Majesty." "Then he shan't wear the order, and he shall have nothing," said his Majesty.

Every reader will make his own comment upon this. The work in question had been written by a man who had the best interests and the honour of his profession at heart, who had done much to maintain them, and whom the late Earl of Dundonald—best known as Lord Cochrane, the hero of Basque Roads—in a letter recently written, has thus characterised:—"He was brave, zealous, intelligent, and even thoughtful, yet active in the performance of his duties." It is painful to expose one act of injustice on the part of a sovereign whose nature, in the main, was manly, upright, and generous.

In 1829 Captain Marryat turned his attention to authorship, and in the following year resigned the command of the *Ariadne*. Having published the "Naval Officer, or Frank Mildmay," the reception of which gave him great encouragement, he set to work with an earnestness and a zeal which he brought to all his undertakings. "The King's Own," "Peter Simple," and "Jacob Faithful," followed each other in rapid succession. To these he added in the course of a few years, "Japhet in Search of a Father;" "Newton Forster;" "Midshipman Easy;" "The Pacha of many Tales;" "Joseph Rushbrook, or The Poacher;" "The Phantom Ship;" "Snarleyow, or The Dog Fiend;" "Percival Keene;" "The Pirate and Three Cutters;" "Masterman Ready;" "Poor Jack;" "The Privateersman;" "The Mission, or Scenes in Africa;" "The Settlers in Canada;" "Olla Podrida;" "Diary in America" (in two parts); "Monsieur Violet's Adventures." All these works obtained a considerable popularity, and even gained the author a reputation which very few modern writers of fiction have succeeded in acquiring. From 1832 to 1836 he was likewise editor of the *Metropolitan Magazine*, in which some of his works of fiction were first produced.

It would be unprofitable to dwell upon the genius of

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Marryat as a novelist. His merits lie upon the surface, and are obvious to every man, woman, and child, who take up one of his works and find themselves unable to lay it down again. He tells plainly and straightforwardly a story, tolerably well constructed, of diversified incidents, alive with uncommon characters, and, as his experience was large and had been acquired over a wide expanse, he had always something to tell which would excite curiosity or rivet attention. He had one quality in common with great men, and in which men of finer genius than himself have been deficient, — a thorough manliness of heart and soul, which, by clearly showing him what he was able to accomplish, preserved him against the perpetration of that sublime nonsense and drivelling cant which now-a-days often pass for fine writing and fine sentiment. “Peter Simple” has been pronounced his best novel; but we confess we like “Jacob Faithful” at least as well; although we think it would have been better if the Dominie had been mitigated, who is rather an extravagance than an original, and if that passage had been discarded in which the parish-boy tells us he reads Tacitus and Horace at a charity-school.

His “Diary in America” gave great offence on the other side of the Atlantic. We do not know whether the captain ever regretted it, but it was an ill-advised publication, and was certain, from its tone as well as its matter, to wound deeply a gallant and sensitive people, who, say what some few may to the contrary, are anxious to stand well in the estimation of the mother-country. But that this work was written with *malice prepense* against the Americans we cannot believe, for the author’s venerable mother is a native of the United States; and it may be pleasing to our brother Jonathan to know, what we are pretty certain is the fact, that from that lady he inherited the energy of will and the vigour of mind which he displayed in all the actions of his life.

Captain Marryat had been seriously ill for more than a

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year, from the bursting of a succession of blood-vessels, which forbade all hope of his recovery, and on the 9th of August 1848 his sufferings were brought to a termination.

He married Catharine, daughter of Sir Stephen Shairp, formerly Chargé d'Affaires at the court of Russia, by whom he left six children. Two of his sons were in the navy. The elder, a lieutenant, bade fair to prove himself a worthy son of his father : he jumped overboard and saved the life of a seaman in the *Tagus*, and his exertions at the wreck of the *Syphax* were of the most heroic kind ; but he perished with nearly the whole of his crew in the wreck of the *Avenger*, on the coast of Africa, in 1847. The younger son, Frank S. Marryat, displayed great talents as a hydrographer, and became midshipman on board her Majesty's ship *Samarang*, surveying vessel. He published in 1848 a splendid volume, entitled "Borneo and the Indian Archipelago, with drawings of costumes and scenery, being a narrative of his surveying cruise," which was too expensive to be successful, and, as a commercial speculation, failed. He died at Kensington Gore, September 1855, at the age of 29. One of Captain Marryat's daughters, Emilia Marryat, has lately commenced authorship, as a writer of Novels and Juvenile Stories.

*May 1869.*

**THE PIRATE**



# THE PIRATE

## CHAPTER I

### THE BAY OF BISCAY

IT was in the latter part of the month of June, of the year 179—, that the angry waves of the Bay of Biscay were gradually subsiding, after a gale of wind as violent as it was unusual during that period of the year. Still they rolled heavily; and, at times, the wind blew up in fitful, angry gusts, as if it would fain renew the elemental combat; but each effort was more feeble, and the dark clouds which had been summoned to the storm, now fled in every quarter before the powerful rays of the sun, who burst their masses asunder with a glorious flood of light and heat; and, as he poured down his resplendent beams, piercing deep into the waters of that portion of the Atlantic to which we now refer, with the exception of one object, hardly visible, as at creation, there was a vast circumference of water, bounded by the fancied canopy of heaven. We have said, with the exception of one object; for in the centre of this picture, so simple, yet so sublime, composed of the three great elements, there was a remnant of the fourth. We say a remnant, for it was but the hull of a vessel, dismasted, water-logged, its upper works only floating occasionally above the waves, when a transient repose from their still violent undulation permitted it to reassume its buoyancy. But this was seldom; one moment it was deluged by the seas, which broke as they



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poured over its gunwale; and the next, it rose from its submersion, as the water escaped from the portholes at its sides.

How many thousands of vessels—how many millions of property—have been abandoned, and eventually consigned to the all-receiving depths of the ocean, through ignorance or through fear! What a mine of wealth must lie buried in its sands! what riches lie entangled amongst its rocks, or remain suspended in its unfathomable gulf, where the compressed fluid is equal in gravity to that which it encircles, there to remain secured in its embedment from corruption and decay, until the destruction of the universe and the return of chaos! Yet, immense as the accumulated loss may be, the major part of it has been occasioned from an ignorance of one of the first laws of nature, that of specific gravity. The vessel to which we have referred was, to all appearance, in a situation of as extreme hazard as that of a drowning man clinging to a single rope-yarn; yet, in reality, she was more secure from descending to the abyss below than many gallantly careering on the waters, their occupants dismissing all fear, and only calculating upon a quick arrival into port.

The *Circassian* had sailed from New Orleans, a gallant and well-appointed ship, with a cargo, the major part of which consisted of cotton. The captain was, in the usual acceptance of the term, a good sailor; the crew were hardy and able seamen. As they crossed the Atlantic, they had encountered the gale to which we have referred, were driven down into the Bay of Biscay, where, as we shall hereafter explain, the vessel was dismasted, and sprang a leak, which baffled all their exertions to keep under. It was now five days since the frightened crew had quitted the vessel in two of her boats, one of which had swamped, and every soul that occupied it had perished; the fate of the other was uncertain.

We said that the crew had deserted the vessel, but we

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did not assert that every existing being had been removed out of her. Had such been the case, we should not have taken up the reader's time in describing inanimate matter. It is life that we portray, and life there still was in the shattered hull thus abandoned to the mockery of the ocean. In the *caboose* of the *Circassian*, that is, in the cooking-house secured on deck, and which fortunately had been so well fixed as to resist the force of the breaking waves, remained three beings—a man, a woman, and a child. The two first-mentioned were of that inferior race which have, for so long a period, been procured from the sultry Afric coast, to toil, but reap not for themselves; the child which lay at the breast of the female was of European blood, now, indeed, deadly pale, as it attempted in vain to draw sustenance from its exhausted nurse, down whose sable cheeks the tears coursed, as she occasionally pressed the infant to her breast, and turned it round to leeward to screen it from the spray which dashed over them at each returning swell. Indifferent to all else, save her little charge, she spoke not, although she shuddered with the cold as the water washed her knees each time that the hull was careened into the wave. Cold and terror had produced a change in her complexion, which now wore a yellow, or sort of copper hue.

The male, who was her companion, sat opposite to her upon the iron range which once had been the receptacle of light and heat, but was now but a weary seat to a drenched and worn-out wretch. He, too, had not spoken for many hours; with the muscles of his face relaxed, his thick lips pouting far in advance of his collapsed cheeks, his high cheek-bones prominent as budding horns, his eyes displaying little but their whites, he appeared to be an object of greater misery than the female, whose thoughts were directed to the infant and not unto herself. Yet his feelings were still acute, although his faculties appeared to be deadened by excess of suffering.

“Eh, me!” cried the negro woman faintly, after a long

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silence, her head falling back with extreme exhaustion. Her companion made no reply, but, roused at the sound of her voice, bent forward, slid open the door a little, and looked out to windward. The heavy spray dashed into his glassy eyes, and obscured his vision; he groaned, and fell back into his former position. "What you tink, Coco?" inquired the negress, covering up more carefully the child, as she bent her head down upon it. A look of despair, and a shudder from cold and hunger, were the only reply.

It was then about eight o'clock in the morning, and the swell of the ocean was fast subsiding. At noon the warmth of the sun was communicated to them through the planks of the *caboose*, while its rays poured a small stream of vivid light through the chinks of the closed panels. The negro appeared gradually to revive; at last he rose, and with some difficulty contrived again to slide open the door. The sea had gradually decreased its violence, and but occasionally broke over the vessel; carefully holding on by the door-jambs, Coco gained the outside, that he might survey the horizon.

"What you see, Coco?" said the female, observing from the *caboose* that his eyes were fixed upon a certain quarter.

"So help me God, me tink me see something; but ab so much salt water in um eye, me no see clear," replied Coco, rubbing away the salt which had crystallised on his face during the morning.

"What you tink um like, Coco?"

"Only one bit cloud," replied he, entering the *caboose*, and resuming his seat upon the grate with a heavy sigh.

"Eh, me!" cried the negress, who had uncovered the child to look at it, and whose powers were sinking fast. "Poor lilly Massa Eddard, him look very bad indeed—him die very soon, me fear. Look, Coco, no ab breath."

The child's head fell back upon the breast of its nurse, and life appeared to be extinct.

"Judy, you no ab milk for piccaninny; suppose um ab no

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milk, how can live? Eh! stop, Judy, me put lilly finger in um mouth; suppose Massa Eddard no dead, him pull."

Coco inserted his finger into the child's mouth, and felt a slight drawing pressure. "Judy," cried Coco, "Massa Eddard no dead yet. Try now, suppose you ab lilly drop oder side."

Poor Judy shook her head mournfully, and a tear rolled down her cheek; she was aware that nature was exhausted. "Coco," said she, wiping her cheek with the back of her hand, "me give me heart blood for Massa Eddard; but no ab milk—all gone."

This forcible expression of love for the child, which was used by Judy, gave an idea to Coco. He drew his knife out of his pocket, and very coolly sawed to the bone of his forefinger. The blood flowed and trickled down to the extremity, which he applied to the mouth of the infant.

"See, Judy, Massa Eddard suck—him not dead," cried Coco, chuckling at the fortunate result of the experiment, and forgetting at the moment their almost hopeless situation.

The child, revived by the strange sustenance, gradually recovered its powers, and in a few minutes it pulled at the finger with a certain degree of vigour.

"Look, Judy, how Massa Eddard take it," continued Coco. "Pull away, Massa Eddard, pull away. Coco ab ten finger, and take long while suck em all dry." But the child was soon satisfied, and fell asleep in the arms of Judy.

"Coco, suppose you go see again," observed Judy. The negro again crawled out, and again he scanned the horizon.

"So help me God, dis time me tink, Judy—yes, so help me God, me see a ship!" cried Coco joyfully.

"Eh!" screamed Judy faintly, with delight; "den Massa Eddard no die."

"Yes, so help me God—he come dis way!" and Coco, who appeared to have recovered a portion of his former strength and activity, clambered on the top of the *caboose*,

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where he sat, cross-legged, waving his yellow handkerchief, with the hope of attracting the attention of those on board; for he knew that it was very possible that an object floating little more than level with the water's surface might escape notice.

As it fortunately happened, the frigate, for such she was, continued her course precisely for the wreck, although it had not been perceived by the look-out men at the mast-heads, whose eyes had been directed to the line of the horizon. In less than an hour our little party were threatened with a new danger, that of being run over by the frigate, which was now within a cable's length of them, driving the seas before her in one widely extended foam, as she pursued her rapid and impetuous course. Coco shouted to his utmost, and fortunately attracted the notice of the men who were on the bowsprit, stowing away the foretopmast-staysail, which had been hoisted up to dry after the gale.

"Starboard, hard!" was roared out.

"Starboard it is," was the reply from the quarter-deck, and the helm was shifted without inquiry, as it always is on board of a man-of-war, although, at the same time, it behoves people to be rather careful how they pass such an order, without being prepared with a subsequent and most satisfactory explanation.

The topmast studding-sail flapped and fluttered, the fore-sail shivered, and the jib filled as the frigate rounded to, narrowly missing the wreck, which was now under the bows, rocking so violently in the white foam of the agitated waters, that it was with difficulty that Coco could, by clinging to the stump of the mainmast, retain his elevated position. The frigate shortened sail, hove-to, and lowered down a quarter-boat, and in less than five minutes Coco, Judy, and the infant, were rescued from their awful situation. Poor Judy, who had borne up against all for the sake of the child, placed it in the arms of the officer who relieved them, and then fell back in a state of insensibility, in which condition

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she was carried on board. Coco, as he took his place in the stern-sheets of the boat, gazed wildly round him, and then broke out into peals of extravagant laughter, which continued without intermission, and were the only replies which he could give to the interrogatories of the quarter-deck, until he fell down in a swoon, and was entrusted to the care of the surgeon.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BACHELOR

ON the evening of the same day on which the child and the two negroes had been saved from the wreck by the fortunate appearance of the frigate, Mr. Witherington, of Finsbury Square, was sitting alone in his dining-room, wondering what could have become of the *Circassian*, and why he had not received intelligence of her arrival. Mr. Witherington, as we said before, was alone; he had his port and his sherry before him; and although the weather was rather warm, there was a small fire in the grate, because, as Mr. Witherington asserted, it looked comfortable. Mr. Witherington having watched the ceiling of the room for some time, although there was certainly nothing new to be discovered, filled another glass of wine, and then proceeded to make himself more comfortable by unbuttoning three more buttons of his waistcoat, pushing his wig further off his head, and casting loose all the buttons at the knees of his breeches; he completed his arrangements by dragging towards him two chairs within his reach, putting his legs upon one while he rested his arm upon the other. And why was not Mr. Witherington to make himself comfortable? He had good health, a good conscience, and eight thousand a year.

Satisfied with all his little arrangements, Mr. Witherington sipped his port wine, and putting down his glass again, fell



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back in his chair, placed his hands on his breast, interwove his fingers; and in this most comfortable position recommenced his speculations as to the non-arrival of the *Circassian*.

We will leave him to his cogitations while we introduce him more particularly to our readers.

The father of Mr. Witherington was a younger son of one of the oldest and proudest families in the West Riding of Yorkshire: he had his choice of the four professions allotted to younger sons whose veins are filled with patrician blood—the army, the navy, the law, and the Church. The army did not suit him, he said, as marching and counter-marching were not comfortable; the navy did not suit him, as there was little comfort in gales of wind and mouldy biscuit; the law did not suit him, as he was not sure that he would be at ease with his conscience, which would not be comfortable; the Church was also rejected, as it was, with him, connected with the idea of a small stipend, hard duty, a wife and eleven children, which were anything but comfortable. Much to the horror of his family he eschewed all the liberal professions, and embraced the offer of an old backslider of an uncle, who proposed to him a situation in his banking-house, and a partnership as soon as he deserved it; the consequence was, that his relations bade him an indignant farewell, and then made no further inquiries about him: he was as decidedly cut as one of the female branches of the family would have been had she committed a *faux pas*.

Nevertheless, Mr. Witherington senior stuck diligently to his business, in a few years was partner, and, at the death of the old gentleman, his uncle, found himself in possession of a good property, and every year coining money at his bank.

Mr. Witherington senior then purchased a house in Finsbury Square, and thought it advisable to look out for a wife.

Having still much of the family pride in his composition, he resolved not to muddle the blood of the Witheringtons by any cross from Cateaton Street or Mincing Lane; and

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after a proper degree of research, he selected the daughter of a Scotch earl, who went to London with a bevy of nine in a Leith smack to barter blood for wealth. Mr. Witherington being so unfortunate as to be the first comer, had the pick of the nine ladies by courtesy; his choice was light-haired, blue-eyed, a little freckled, and very tall, by no means bad-looking, and standing on the list in the family Bible No. IV. From this union Mr. Witherington had issue; first, a daughter, christened Moggy, whom we shall soon have to introduce to our readers as a spinster of forty-seven; and second, Antony Alexander Witherington, Esquire, whom we just now have left in a very comfortable position, and in a very brown study.

Mr. Witherington senior persuaded his son to enter the banking-house, and, as a dutiful son, he entered it every day: but he did nothing more, having made the fortunate discovery that "his father was born before him;" or, in other words, that his father had plenty of money, and would be necessitated to leave it behind him.

As Mr. Witherington senior had always studied comfort, his son had early imbibed the same idea, and carried his feelings, in that respect, to a much greater excess: he divided things into comfortable and uncomfortable. One fine day, Lady Mary Witherington, after paying all the household bills, paid the debt of Nature; that is, she died: her husband paid the undertaker's bill, so it is to be presumed that she was buried.

Mr. Witherington senior shortly afterwards had a stroke of apoplexy, which knocked him down. Death, who has no feelings of honour, struck him when down. And Mr. Witherington, after having laid a few days in bed, was by a second stroke laid in the same vault as Lady Mary Witherington; and Mr. Witherington junior (our Mr. Witherington) after deducting £40,000 for his sister's fortune, found himself in possession of a clear £8000 per annum, and an excellent house in Finsbury Square. Mr. Witherington considered this

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a comfortable income, and he therefore retired altogether from business.

During the lifetime of his parents he had been witness to one or two matrimonial scenes, which had induced him to put down matrimony as one of the things not comfortable; therefore he remained a bachelor.

His sister Moggy also remained unmarried; but whether it was from a very unprepossessing squint which deterred suitors, or from the same dislike to matrimony as her brother had imbibed, it is not in our power to say. Mr. Witherington was three years younger than his sister; and although he had for some time worn a wig, it was only because he considered it more comfortable. Mr. Witherington's whole character might be summed up in two words—eccentricity and benevolence; eccentric he certainly was, as most bachelors usually are. Man is but a rough pebble without the attrition received from contact with the gentler sex; it is wonderful how the ladies pumice a man down to a smoothness which occasions him to roll over and over with the rest of his species, jostling but not wounding his neighbours, as the waves of circumstances bring him into collision with them.

Mr. Witherington roused himself from his deep reverie, and felt for the string connected with the bell-pull, which it was the butler's duty invariably to attach to the arm of his master's chair previous to his last exit from the dining-room; for, as Mr. Witherington very truly observed, it was very uncomfortable to be obliged to get up and ring the bell; indeed, more than once Mr. Witherington had calculated the advantages and disadvantages of having a daughter about eight years old who could ring the bell, air the newspapers, and cut the leaves of a new novel.

When, however, he called to mind that she could not always remain at that precise age, he decided that the balance of comfort was against it.

Mr. Witherington having pulled the bell again, fell into a brown study.

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Mr. Jonathan, the butler, made his appearance; but observing that his master was occupied, he immediately stopped at the door, erect, motionless, and with a face as melancholy as if he was performing mute at the porch of some departed peer of the realm; for it is an understood thing, that the greater the rank of the defunct the longer must be the face, and, of course, the better must be the pay.

Now, as Mr. Witherington is still in profound thought, and Mr. Jonathan will stand as long as a hackney-coach horse, we will just leave them as they are, while we introduce the brief history of the latter to our readers. Jonathan Trapp has served as *foot-boy*, which term, we believe, is derived from those who are in that humble capacity receiving a *quantum suff.* of the application of the feet of those above them to increase the energy of their service; then as *foot-man*, which implies that they have been promoted to the more agreeable right of administering instead of receiving the above dishonourable applications; and lastly, for promotion could go no higher in the family, he had been raised to the dignity of butler in the service of Mr. Witherington senior. Jonathan then fell in love, for butlers are guilty of indiscretions as well as their masters: neither he nor his fair flame, who was a lady's-maid in another family, notwithstanding that they had witnessed the consequences of this error in others, would take warning; they gave warning, and they married.

Like most butlers and ladies'-maids who pair off, they set up a public-house; and it is but justice to the lady's-maid to say, that she would have preferred an eating-house, but was overruled by Jonathan, who argued, that although people would drink when they were not dry, they never would eat unless they were hungry.

Now, although there was truth in the observation, this is certain, that business did not prosper: it has been surmised that Jonathan's tall, lank, lean figure injured his custom, as people are but too much inclined to judge of the goodness of

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the ale by the rubicund face and rotundity of the landlord; and therefore inferred that there could be no good beer where mine host was the picture of famine. There certainly is much in appearances in this world; and it appears, that in consequence of Jonathan's cadaverous appearance, he very soon appeared in the *Gazette*; but what ruined Jonathan in one profession procured him immediate employment in another. An appraiser, upholsterer, and undertaker, who was called in to value the fixtures, fixed his eye upon Jonathan, and knowing the value of his peculiarly lugubrious appearance, and having a half-brother of equal height, offered him immediate employment as a mute. Jonathan soon forgot to mourn his own loss of a few hundreds in his new occupation of mourning the loss of thousands; and his erect, stiff, statue-like carriage, and long melancholy face, as he stood at the portals of those who had entered the portals of the next world, were but too often a sarcasm upon the grief of the inheritors. Even grief is worth nothing in this trafficking world unless it is paid for. Jonathan buried many, and at last buried his wife. So far all was well; but at last he buried his master, the undertaker, which was not quite so desirable. Although Jonathan wept not, yet did he express mute sorrow as he marshalled him to his long home, and drank to his memory in a pot of porter as he returned from the funeral, perched, with many others, like carrion crows on the top of the hearse.

And now Jonathan was thrown out of employment from a reason which most people would have thought the highest recommendation. Every undertaker refused to take him, because they could not *match* him. In this unfortunate dilemma, Jonathan thought of Mr. Witherington junior; he had served and he had buried Mr. Witherington his father, and Lady Mary his mother; he felt that he had strong claims for such variety of services, and he applied to the bachelor. Fortunately for Jonathan, Mr. Witherington's butler-incumbent was just about to commit the same folly as

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Jonathan had done before, and Jonathan was again installed, resolving in his own mind to lead his former life, and have nothing more to do with ladies'-maids. But from habit Jonathan still carried himself as a mute on all ordinary occasions—never indulging in an approximation to mirth, except when he perceived that his master was in high spirits, and then rather from a sense of duty than from any real hilarity of heart.

Jonathan was no mean scholar for his station in life, and, during his service with the undertaker, he had acquired the English of all the Latin mottoes which are placed upon the hatchments; and these mottoes, when he considered them as apt, he was very apt to quote. We left Jonathan standing at the door; he had closed it, and the handle still remained in his hand. "Jonathan," said Mr. Witherington, after a long pause—"I wish to look at the last letter from New York; you will find it on my dressing-table."

Jonathan quitted the room without reply, and made his reappearance with the letter.

"It is a long time that I have been expecting this vessel, Jonathan," observed Mr. Witherington, unfolding the letter.

"Yes, sir, a long while; *tempus fugit*," replied the butler in a low tone, half shutting his eyes.

"I hope to God no accident has happened," continued Mr. Witherington; "my poor little cousin and her twins! e'en now that I speak, they may be all at the bottom of the sea."

"Yes, sir," replied the butler; "the sea defrauds many an honest undertaker of his profits."

"By the blood of the Witheringtons! I may be left without an heir, and shall be obliged to marry, which would be very uncomfortable."

"Very little comfort," echoed Jonathan—"my wife is dead. *In cælo quies*."

"Well, we must hope for the best; but this suspense is



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anything but comfortable," observed Mr. Witherington, after looking over the contents of the letter for at least the twentieth time.

"That will do, Jonathan; I'll ring for coffee presently;" and Mr. Witherington was again alone and with his eyes fixed upon the ceiling.

A cousin of Mr. Witherington, and a very great favourite (for Mr. Witherington, having a large fortune, and not having anything to do with business, was courted by his relations), had, to a certain degree, committed herself; that is to say, that, notwithstanding the injunctions of her parents, she had fallen in love with a young lieutenant in a marching regiment, whose pedigree was but respectable, and whose fortune was anything but respectable, consisting merely of a subaltern's pay. Poor men, unfortunately, always make love better than those who are rich, because, having less to care about, and not being puffed up with their own consequence, they are not so selfish, and think much more of the lady than of themselves. Young ladies, also, who fall in love, never consider whether there is sufficient "to make the pot boil"—probably because young ladies in love lose their appetites, and, not feeling inclined to eat at that time, they imagine that love will always supply the want of food. Now, we will appeal to the married ladies whether we are not right in asserting that, although the collation spread for them and their friends on the day of the marriage is looked upon with almost loathing, they do not find their appetites return with interest soon afterwards. This was precisely the case with Cecilia Witherington, or rather Cecilia Templemore, for she had changed her name the day before. It was also the case with her husband, who always had a good appetite, even during his days of courtship; and the consequence was, that the messman's account, for they lived in barracks, was, in a few weeks, rather alarming. Cecilia applied to her family, who very kindly sent her word that she might starve; but, the advice neither suiting her nor her husband, she then

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wrote to her cousin Antony, who sent her word that he would be most happy to receive them at his table, and that they should take up their abode in Finsbury Square. This was exactly what they wished ; but still there was a certain difficulty ; Lieutenant Templemore's regiment was quartered in a town in Yorkshire, which was some trifling distance from Finsbury Square ; and to be at Mr. Witherington's dinner-table at 6 P.M., with the necessity of appearing at parade every morning at 9 A.M., was a dilemma not to be got out of. Several letters were interchanged upon this knotty subject ; and at last it was agreed that Mr. Templemore should sell out, and come up to Mr. Witherington with his pretty wife. He did so, and found that it was much more comfortable to turn out at nine o'clock in the morning to a good breakfast than to a martial parade. But Mr. Templemore had an honest pride and independence of character which would not permit him to eat the bread of idleness, and after a sojourn of two months in most comfortable quarters, without a messman's bill, he frankly stated his feelings to Mr. Witherington, and requested his assistance to procure for himself an honourable livelihood. Mr. Witherington, who had become attached to them both, would have remonstrated, observing that Cecilia was his own cousin, and that he was a confirmed bachelor ; but, in this instance, Mr. Templemore was firm, and Mr. Witherington very unwillingly consented. A mercantile house of the highest respectability required a partner who could superintend their consignments to America. Mr. Witherington advanced the sum required ; and in a few weeks Mr. and Mrs. Templemore sailed for New York.

Mr. Templemore was active and intelligent ; their affairs prospered ; and in a few years they anticipated a return to their native soil with a competence. But the autumn of the second year after their arrival proved very sickly ; the yellow fever raged ; and among the thousands who were carried off Mr. Templemore was a victim, about three weeks after his

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wife had been brought to bed of twins. Mrs. Templemore rose from her couch a widow and the mother of two fine boys. The loss of Mr. Templemore was replaced by the establishment with which he was connected, and Mr. Witherington offered to his cousin that asylum which, in her mournful and unexpected bereavement, she so much required. In three months her affairs were arranged; and with her little boys hanging at the breasts of two negro nurses—for no others could be procured who would undertake the voyage—Mrs. Templemore, with Coco as male servant, embarked on board of the good ship *Circassian*, A 1, bound to Liverpool.

## CHAPTER III

### THE GALE

THOSE who, standing on the pier, had witnessed the proud bearing of the *Circassian* as she gave her canvas to the winds, little contemplated her fate: still less did those on board; for confidence is the characteristic of seamen, and they have the happy talent of imparting their confidence to whomsoever may be in their company. We shall pass over the voyage, confining ourselves to a description of the catastrophe.

It was during a gale from the north-west, which had continued for three days, and by which the *Circassian* had been driven into the Bay of Biscay, that, at about twelve o'clock at night, a slight lull was perceptible. The captain, who had remained on deck, sent down for the chief mate. "Oswald," said Captain Ingram, "the gale is breaking, and I think before morning we shall have had the worst of it. I shall lie down for an hour or two: call me if there be any change."

Oswald Bareth, a tall, sinewy-built, and handsome specimen of transatlantic growth, examined the whole circumference of the horizon before he replied. At last his eyes were

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steadily fixed to leeward: "I've a notion not, sir," said he; "I see no signs of clearing off to leeward: only a lull for relief, and a fresh hand at the bellows, depend upon it."

"We have now had it three days," replied Captain Ingram. "and that's the life of a summer's gale."

"Yes," rejoined the mate; "but always provided that it don't blow black again. I don't like the look of it, sir; and have it back we shall, as sure as there's snakes in Virginny."

"Well, so be it if so be," was the safe reply of the captain. "You must keep a sharp look-out, Bareth, and don't leave the deck to call me; send a hand down."

The captain descended to his cabin. Oswald looked at the compass in the binnacle—spoke a few words to the man at the helm—gave one or two terrible kicks in the ribs to some of the men who were *caulking*—sounded the pump-well—put a fresh quid of tobacco into his cheek, and then proceeded to examine the heavens above. A cloud, much darker and more descending than the others, which obscured the firmament, spread over the zenith, and based itself upon the horizon to leeward. Oswald's eye had been fixed upon it but a few seconds, when he beheld a small lambent gleam of lightning pierce through the most opaque part; then another, and more vivid. Of a sudden the wind lulled, and the *Circassian* righted from her careen. Again the wind howled, and again the vessel was pressed down to her bearings by its force; again another flash of lightning, which was followed by a distant peal of thunder.

"Had the worst of it, did you say, captain? I've a notion that the worst is yet to come," muttered Oswald, still watching the heavens.

"How does she carry her helm, Matthew?" inquired Oswald, walking aft.

"Spoke a-weather."

"I'll have that trysail off of her, at any rate," continued the mate. "Aft, there, my lads! and lower down the trysail. Keep the sheet fast till it's down, or the flogging will frighten

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the lady-passenger out of her wits. Well, if ever I own a craft, I'll have no women on board. Dollars shan't tempt me."

The lightning now played in rapid forks; and the loud thunder, which instantaneously followed each flash, proved its near approach. A deluge of slanting rain descended—the wind lulled—roared again—then lulled—shifted a point or two, and the drenched and heavy sails flapped.

"Up with the helm, Mat!" cried Oswald, as a near flash of lightning for a moment blinded, and the accompanying peal of thunder deafened, those on deck. Again the wind blew strong—it ceased, and it was a dead calm. The sails hung down from the yards, and the rain descended in perpendicular torrents, while the ship rocked to and fro in the trough of the sea, and the darkness became suddenly intense.

"Down, there, one of you! and call the captain," said Oswald. "By the Lord! we shall have it. Main braces there, men, and square the yards. Be smart! That topsail should have been in," muttered the mate; "but I'm not captain. Square away the yards, my lads!" continued he; "quick, quick!—there's no child's play here!"

Owing to the difficulty of finding and passing the ropes to each other, from the intensity of the darkness, and the deluge of rain which blinded them, the men were not able to execute the order of the mate so soon as it was necessary; and before they could accomplish their task, or Captain Ingram could gain the deck, the wind suddenly burst upon the devoted vessel from the quarter directly opposite to that from which the gale had blown, taking her all aback, and throwing her on her beam-ends. The man at the helm was hurled over the wheel; while the rest, who were with Oswald at the main-bits, with the coils of ropes, and every other article on deck not secured, were rolled into the scuppers, struggling to extricate themselves from the mass of confusion and the water in which they floundered. The sudden revulsion awoke all the men below, who imagined that the ship was

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foundering; and, from the only hatchway not secured, they poured up in their shirts with their other garments in their hands, to put them on—if fate permitted.

Oswald Bareth was the first who clambered up from the leeward. He gained the helm, which he put hard up. Captain Ingram and some of the seamen also gained the helm. It is the rendezvous of all good seamen in emergencies of this description; but the howling of the gale—the blinding of the rain and salt spray—the seas checked in their running by the shift of wind, and breaking over the ship in vast masses of water—the tremendous peals of thunder—and the intense darkness which accompanied these horrors, added to the inclined position of the vessel, which obliged them to climb from one part of the deck to another, for some time checked all profitable communication. Their only friend, in this conflict of the elements, was the lightning (unhappy, indeed, the situation in which lightning can be welcomed as a friend); but its vivid and forked flames, darting down upon every quarter of the horizon, enabled them to perceive their situation; and, awful as it was, when momentarily presented to their sight, it was not so awful as darkness and uncertainty. To those who have been accustomed to the difficulties and dangers of a sea-faring life, there are no lines which speak more forcibly to the imagination, or prove the beauty and power of the Greek poet, than those in the noble prayer of Ajax:—

“ Lord of earth and air,  
O king ! O father ! hear my humble prayer.  
Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore ;  
Give me to see—and Ajax asks no more.  
If Greece must perish—we thy will obey ;  
But *let us perish in the face of day !* ”

Oswald gave the helm to two of the seamen, and with his knife cut adrift the axes, which were lashed round the mizen-mast in painted canvas covers. One he retained for himself—the others he put into the hands of the boatswain .



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and the second mate. To speak so as to be heard was almost impossible, from the tremendous roaring of the wind ; but the lamp still burned in the binnacle, and by its feeble light Captain Ingram could distinguish the signs made by the mate, and could give his consent. It was necessary that the ship should be put before the wind, and the helm had no power over her. In a short time the lanyards of the mizen rigging were severed, and the mizen-mast went over the side, almost unperceived by the crew on the other parts of the deck, or even those near, had it not been from blows received by those who were too close to it, from the falling of the topsail sheets and the rigging about the mast.

Oswald, with his companions, regained the binnacle, and for little while watched the compass. The ship did not pay off, and appeared to settle down more into the water. Again Oswald made his signs, and again the captain gave his assent. Forward sprang the undaunted mate, clinging to the bulwark and belaying-pins, and followed by his hardy companions, until they had all three gained the main channels. Here, their exposure to the force of the breaking waves, and the stoutness of the ropes yielding but slowly to the blows of the axes, which were used almost under water, rendered the service one of extreme difficulty and danger. The boatswain was washed over the bulwark and dashed to leeward, where the lee-rigging only saved him from a watery grave. Unsubdued, he again climbed up to windward, rejoined and assisted his companions. The last blow was given by Oswald—the lanyards flew through the dead-eyes—and the tall mast disappeared in the foaming seas. Oswald and his companions hastened from their dangerous position, and rejoined the captain, who, with many of the crew, still remained near the wheel. The ship now slowly paid off and righted. In a few minutes she was flying before the gale, rolling heavily, and occasionally striking upon the wrecks of the masts, which she towed with her by the lee-rigging.

Although the wind blew with as much violence as before,

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still it was not with the same noise, now that the ship was before the wind with her after-masts gone. The next service was to clear the ship of the wrecks of the masts; but, although all now assisted, but little could be effected until the day had dawned, and even then it was a service of danger, as the ship rolled gunwale under. Those who performed the duty were slung in ropes, that they might not be washed away; and hardly was it completed, when a heavy roll, assisted by a jerking heave from a sea which struck her on the chestree, sent the foremast over the starboard cathead. Thus was the *Circassian* dismasted in the gale.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LEAK

THE wreck of the foremast was cleared from the ship; the gale continued; but the sun shone brightly and warmly. The *Circassian* was again brought to the wind. All danger was now considered to be over, and the seamen joked and laughed as they were busied in preparing jury-masts to enable them to reach their destined port.

"I wouldn't have cared so much about this spree," said the boatswain, "if it warn't for the mainmast; it was such a beauty. There's not another stick to be found equal to it in the whole length of the Mississippi."

"Bah! man," replied Oswald; "there's as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it, and as good sticks growing as ever were felled; but I guess we'll pay pretty dear for our spars when we get to Liverpool—but that concerns the owners."

The wind, which at the time of its sudden change to the southward and eastward had blown with the force of a hurricane, now settled into a regular strong gale, such as sailors are prepared to meet and laugh at. The sky was

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also bright and clear, and they had not the danger of a lee shore. It was a delightful change after a night of darkness, danger, and confusion; and the men worked that they might get sufficient sail on the ship to steady her, and enable them to shape a course.

"I suppose, now that we have the trysail on her forward, the captain will be for running for it," observed one who was busy turning in a dead-eye.

"Yes," replied the boatswain; "and with this wind on our quarter we shan't want much sail, I've a notion."

"Well then, one advantage in losing your mast—you haven't much trouble about the rigging."

"Trouble enough, though, Bill, when we get in," replied another gruffly; "new lower rigging to parcel and sarve, and every block to turn in afresh."

"Never mind, longer in port—I'll get spliced."

"Why, how often do you mean to get spliced, Bill? You've a wife in every State, to my sartin knowledge."

"I arn't got one at Liverpool, Jack."

"Well, you may take one there, Bill; for you've been sweet upon that nigger girl for these last three weeks."

"Any port in a' storm, but she won't do for harbour duty. But the fact is, you're all wrong there, Jack: it's the babbies I likes—I likes to see them both together, hanging at the niggers' breasts, I always think of two spider-monkeys nursing two kittens."

"I knows the women, but I never knows the children. It's just six of one and half-a-dozen of the other; ain't it, Bill?"

"Yes; like two bright bullets out of the same mould. I say, Bill, did any of your wives ever have twins?"

"No; nor I don't intend, until the owners give us double pay."

"By-the-bye," interrupted Oswald, who had been standing under the weather bulk-head, listening to the conversation, and watching the work in progress, "we may just as well see if she has made any water with all this straining and

## THE LEAK

buffeting. By the Lord ! I never thought of that. Carpenter, lay down your adze and sound the well."

The carpenter, who, notwithstanding the uneasiness of the dismayed vessel, was performing his important share of the work, immediately complied with the order. He drew up the rope-yarn, to which an iron rule had been suspended, and lowered down into the pump-well, and perceived that the water was dripping from it. Imagining that it must have been wet from the quantity of water shipped over all, the carpenter disengaged the rope-yarn from the rule, drew another from the junk lying on the deck, which the seamen were working up, and then carefully proceeded to plumb the well. He hauled it up, and, looking at it for some moments aghast, exclaimed, "*Seven feet water in the hold, by G—d !*"

If the crew of the *Circassian*, the whole of which were on deck, had been struck with an electric shock, the sudden change of their countenances could not have been greater than was produced by this appalling intelligence.

Heap upon sailors every disaster, every danger which can be accumulated from the waves, the wind, the elements, or the enemy, and they will bear up against them with a courage amounting to heroism. All that they demand is, that the one plank "between them and death" is sound, and they will trust to their own energies, and will be confident in their own skill : but *spring a leak*, and they are half paralysed ; and if it gain upon them they are subdued ; for when they find that their exertions are futile, they are little better than children.

Oswald sprang to the pumps when he heard the carpenter's report. "Try again, Abel—it cannot be : cut away that line ; hand us here a dry rope-yarn."

Once more the well was sounded by Oswald, and the result was the same. "We must rig the pumps, my lads," said the mate, endeavouring to conceal his own fears ; "half this water must have found its way in when she was on her beam-ends."

## THE PIRATE

This idea, so judiciously thrown out, was caught at by the seamen, who hastened to obey the order, while Oswald went down to acquaint the captain, who, worn-out with watching and fatigue, had, now that danger was considered to be over, thrown himself into his cot to obtain a few hours' repose.

"Do you think, Bareth, that we have sprung a leak?" said the captain earnestly. "She never could have taken in that quantity of water."

"Never, sir," replied the mate; "but she has been so strained, that she may have opened her top-sides. I trust it is no worse."

"What is your opinion, then?"

"I am afraid that the wreck of the masts have injured her; you may recollect how often we struck against them before we could clear ourselves of them; once, particularly, the mainmast appeared to be right under her bottom, I recollect, and she struck very heavy on it."

"Well, it is God's will; let us get on deck as fast as we can."

When they arrived on deck, the carpenter walked up to the captain, and quietly said to him, "*Seven feet three, sir.*" The pumps were then in full action; the men had divided, by the direction of the boatswain, and, stripped naked to the waist, relieved each other every two minutes. For half-an-hour they laboured incessantly.

This was the half-hour of suspense: the great point to be ascertained was, whether she leaked through the top-sides, and had taken in the water during the second gale; if so, there was every hope of keeping it under. Captain Ingram and the mate remained in silence near the capstern, the former with his watch in his hand, during the time that the sailors exerted themselves to the utmost. It was ten minutes past seven when the half-hour had expired; the well was sounded and the line carefully measured—*Seven feet six inches!* So that the water had gained upon them, notwith-

## THE LEAK

standing that they had plied the pumps to the utmost of their strength.

A mute look of despair was exchanged among the crew, but it was followed up by curses and execrations. Captain Ingram remained silent, with his lips compressed.

"It's all over with us!" exclaimed one of the men.

"Not yet, my lads; we have one more chance," said Oswald. "I've a notion that the ship's sides have been opened by the infernal straining of last night, and that she is now taking it in at the top-sides generally; if so, we have only to put her before the wind again, and have another good spell at the pumps. When no longer strained, as she is now with her broadside to the sea, she will close all up again."

"I shouldn't wonder if Mr. Bareth is not right," replied the carpenter; "however, that's my notion, too."

"And mine," added Captain Ingram. "Come, my men! never say die while there's a shot in the locker. Let's try her again." And, to encourage the men, Captain Ingram threw off his coat and assisted at the first spell, while Oswald went to the helm and put the ship before the wind.

As the *Circassian* rolled before the gale, the lazy manner in which she righted proved how much water there was in the hold. The seamen exerted themselves for a whole hour without intermission, and the well was again sounded—*eight feet!*

The men did not assert that they would pump no longer; but they too plainly showed their intentions by each resuming in silence his shirt and jacket, which he had taken off at the commencement of his exertions.

"What's to be done, Oswald?" said Captain Ingram, as they walked aft. "You see the men will pump no longer; nor, indeed, would it be of any use. We are doomed."

"The *Circassian* is, sir, I am afraid," replied the mate: "pumping is of no avail; they could not keep her afloat till daybreak. We must therefore trust to our boats, which I believe to be all sound, and quit her before night."



## THE PIRATE

"Crowded boats in such a sea as this !" replied Captain Ingram, shaking his head mournfully.

"Are bad enough, I grant ; but better than the sea itself. All we can do now is to try and keep the men sober, and if we can do so it will be better than to fatigue them uselessly ; they'll want all their strength before they put foot again upon dry land—if ever they are so fortunate. Shall I speak to them ?"

"Do, Oswald," replied the captain ; "for myself I care little, God knows ; but my wife—my children !"

"My lads," said Oswald, going forward to the men, who had waited in moody silence the result of the conference—"as for pumping any longer it would be only wearing out your strength for no good. We must now look to our boats ; and a good boat is better than a bad ship. Still this gale and cross-running sea are rather too much for boats at present ; we had therefore better stick to the ship as long as we can. Let us set to with a will and get the boats ready, with provisions, water, and what else may be needful, and then we must trust to God's mercy and our own endeavours."

"No boat can stand this sea," observed one of the men. "I'm of opinion, as it's to be a short life, it may as well be a merry one. What d'ye say, my lads ?" continued he, appealing to the men.

Several of the crew were of the same opinion ; but Oswald, stepping forward, seized one of the axes which lay at the main-bits, and going up to the seaman who had spoken, looked him steadfastly in the face—

"Williams," said the mate, "a short life it may be to all of us, but not a merry one ; the meaning of which I understand very well. Sorry I shall be to have your blood, or that of others, on my hands ; but as sure as there's a heaven, I'll cleave to the shoulder the first man who attempts to break into the spirit-room. You know I never joke. Shame upon you ! Do you call yourselves men, when, for the sake of a little liquor now, you would lose your only chance of getting

## THE LEAK

drunk every day as soon as we get on shore again? There's a time for all things; and I've a notion this is a time to be sober."

As most of the crew sided with Oswald, the weaker party were obliged to submit, and the preparations were commenced. The two boats on the booms were found to be in good condition. One party was employed cutting away the bulwarks, that the boats might be launched over the side, as there were no means of hoisting them out. The well was again sounded. Nine feet water in the hold, and the ship evidently settling fast. Two hours had now passed, and the gale was not so violent; the sea, also, which at the change of wind had been cross, appeared to have recovered its regular run. All was ready; the sailors, once at work again, had, in some measure, recovered their spirits, and were buoyed up with fresh hopes at the slight change in their favour from the decrease of the wind. The two boats were quite large enough to contain the whole of the crew and passengers; but, as the sailors said among themselves (proving the kindness of their hearts), "What was to become of those two poor babbies, in an open boat for days and nights, perhaps?" Captain Ingram had gone down to Mrs. Templemore, to impart to her their melancholy prospects; and the mother's heart, as well as the mother's voice, echoed the words of the seamen, "What will become of my poor babes?"

It was not till nearly six o'clock in the evening that all was ready: the ship was slowly brought to the wind again, and the boats launched over the side. By this time the gale was much abated; but the vessel was full of water, and was expected soon to go down.

There is no time in which coolness and determination are more required than in a situation like the one in which we have attempted to describe. It is impossible to know the precise moment at which a water-logged vessel, in a heavy sea, may go down; and its occupants are in a state of mental fever, with the idea of their remaining in her so late that

## THE PIRATE

she will suddenly submerge, and leave them to struggle in the wave. This feeling actuated many of the crew of the *Circassian*, and they had already retreated to the boats. All was arranged; Oswald had charge of one boat, and it was agreed that the larger should receive Mrs. Templemore and her children, under the protection of Captain Ingram. The number appointed to Oswald's boat being completed he shoved off, to make room for the other, and laid to to leeward, waiting to keep company. Mrs. Templemore came up with Captain Ingram, and was assisted by him into the boat. The nurse, with one child, was at last placed by her side; Coco was leading Judy, the other nurse, with the remaining infant in her arms; and Captain Ingram, who had been obliged to go into the boat with the first child, was about to return to assist Judy with the other, when the ship gave a heavy pitch, and her forecastle was buried in the wave; at the same time the gunwale of the boat was stove by coming in contact with the side of the vessel. "She's down, by G—d!" exclaimed the alarmed seamen in the boat, shoving off to escape from the vortex.

Captain Ingram, who was standing on the boat's thwarts to assist Judy, was thrown back into the bottom of the boat; and before he could extricate himself, the boat was separated from the ship, and had drifted to leeward.

"My child!" screamed the mother; "my child!"

"Pull to again, my lads!" cried Captain Ingram, seizing the tiller.

The men, who had been alarmed at the idea that the ship was going down, now that they saw that she was still afloat, got out the oars and attempted to regain her, but in vain—they could not make head against the sea and wind. Further and further did they drift to leeward, notwithstanding their exertions; while the frantic mother extended her arms, imploring and entreating. Captain Ingram, who had stimulated the sailors to the utmost, perceived that further attempts were useless.

## THE OLD MAID

"My child! my child!" screamed Mrs. Templemore, standing up, and holding out her arms towards the vessel. At a sign from the captain, the head of the boat was veered round. The bereaved mother knew that all hope was gone, and she fell down in a state of insensibility.

## CHAPTER V

### THE OLD MAID

ONE morning, shortly after the disasters which we have described, Mr. Witherington descended to his breakfast-room somewhat earlier than usual, and found his green morocco easy-chair already tenanted by no less a personage than William the footman, who, with his feet on the fender, was so attentively reading the newspaper that he did not hear his master's entrance. "By my ancestor, who fought on his stumps! but I hope you are quite comfortable, Mr. William; nay, I beg I may not disturb you, sir."

William, although as impudent as most of his fraternity, was a little taken aback: "I beg your pardon, sir, but Mr. Jonathan had not time to look over the paper."

"Nor is it required that he should, that I know of, sir."

"Mr. Jonathan says, sir, that it is always right to look over the *deaths*, that news of that kind may not shock you."

"Very considerate, indeed."

"And there is a story there, sir, about a shipwreck."

"A shipwreck! where, William? God bless me! where is it?"

"I am afraid it is the same ship you are so anxious about, sir—the—I forget the name, sir."

Mr. Witherington took the newspaper, and his eye soon caught the paragraph in which the rescue of the two negroes and child from the wreck of the *Circassian* was fully detailed.

"It is indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Witherington. "My poor

## THE PIRATE

Cecilia in an open boat! one of the boats was seen to go down—perhaps she's dead—merciful God! one boy saved. Mercy on me! where's Jonathan?"

"Here, sir," replied Jonathan, very solemnly, who had just brought in the eggs, and now stood erect as a mute behind his master's chair, for it was a case of danger, if not of death.

"I must go to Portsmouth immediately after breakfast—shan't eat, though—appetite all gone."

"People seldom do, sir, on these melancholy occasions," replied Jonathan. "Will you take your own carriage, sir, or a mourning coach?"

"A mourning coach at fourteen miles an hour, with two pair of horses! Jonathan, you're crazy."

"Will you please to have black silk hatbands and gloves for the coachman and servants who attend you, sir?"

"Confound your shop! no; this is a resurrection, not a death: it appears that the negro thinks only one of the boats went down."

"*Mors omnia vincit*," quoth Jonathan, casting up his eyes.

"Never you mind that; mind your own business. That's the postman's knock—see if there are any letters."

There were several; and amongst the others there was one from Captain Maxwell, of the *Eurydice*, detailing the circumstances already known, and informing Mr. Witherington that he had despatched the two negroes and the child to his address by that day's coach, and that one of the officers, who was going to town by the same conveyance, would see them safe to his house.

Captain Maxwell was an old acquaintance of Mr. Witherington—had dined at his house in company with the Templemores, and therefore had extracted quite enough information from the negroes to know where to direct them.

"By the blood of my ancestors! they'll be here to-night," cried Mr. Witherington; "and I have saved my journey. What is to be done? better tell Mary to get rooms ready: d'ye hear, William; beds for one little boy and two niggers."

## THE OLD MAID

"Yes, sir," replied William; "but where are the black people to be put?"

"Put! I don't care; one may sleep with cook, the other with Mary."

"Very well, sir, I'll tell them," replied William, hastening away, delighted at the row which he anticipated in the kitchen.

"If you please, sir," observed Jonathan, "one of the negroes is, I believe, a man."

"Well, what then?"

"Only, sir, the maids may object to sleep with him."

"By all the plagues of the Witheringtons! this is true; well, you may take him, Jonathan—you like that colour."

"Not in the dark, sir," replied Jonathan, with a bow.

"Well then, let them sleep together; so that affair is settled."

"Are they man and wife, sir?" said the butler.

"The devil take them both! how should I know? Let me have my breakfast, and we'll talk over the matter by-and-by."

Mr. Witherington applied to his eggs and muffin, eating his breakfast as fast as he could, without knowing why; but the reason was that he was puzzled and perplexed with the anticipated arrival, and longed to think quietly over the dilemma, for it was a dilemma to an old bachelor. As soon as he had swallowed his second cup of tea he put himself into his easy-chair, in an easy attitude, and was very soon soliloquising as follows:—

"By the blood of the Witheringtons! what am I, an old bachelor, to do with a baby, and a wet-nurse as black as the ace of spades, and another black fellow in the bargain? Send him back again! yes, that's best? but the child—woke every morning at five o'clock with its squalling—obliged to kiss it three times a day—pleasant!—and then that nigger of a nurse—thick lips—kissing child all day, and then holding it out to me—ignorant as a cow—if child has the stomach—



## THE PIRATE

ache she'll cram a pepper-pod down its throat—West India fashion—children never without the stomach-ache—my poor, poor cousin!—what has become of her and the other child, too?—wish they may pick her up, poor dear! and then she will come and take care of her own children—don't know what to do—great mind to send for sister Moggy—but she's so *fussy*—won't be in a hurry. Think again."

Here Mr. Witherington was interrupted by two taps at the door.

"Come in," said he; and the cook, with her face as red as if she had been dressing a dinner for eighteen, made her appearance without the usual clean apron.

"If you please, sir," said she, curtseying, "I will thank you to suit yourself with another cook."

"Oh, very well," replied Mr. Witherington, angry at the interruption.

"And if you please, sir, I should like to go this very day—indeed, sir, I shall not stay."

"Go to the devil! if you please," replied Mr. Witherington angrily; "but first go out and shut the door after you."

The cook retired, and Mr. Witherington was again alone.

"Confound the old woman—what a huff she is in! won't cook for black people, I suppose—yes, that's it."

Here Mr. Witherington was again interrupted by a second double tap at the door.

"Oh! thought better of it, I suppose. Come in."

It was not the cook, but Mary, the housemaid, that entered.

"If you please, sir," said she, whimpering, "I should wish to leave my situation."

"A conspiracy, by heavens! Well, you may go."

"To-night, sir, if you please," answered the woman.

"This moment, for all I care!" exclaimed Mr. Witherington in his wrath.

The housemaid retired; and Mr. Witherington took some time to compose himself.

## THE OLD MAID

"Servants all going to the devil in this country," said he at last ; "proud fools—won't clean rooms after black people, I suppose—yes, that's it, confound them all, black and white ! here's my whole establishment upset by the arrival of a baby. Well, it is very uncomfortable—what shall I do ?—send for sister Moggy ?—no, I'll send for Jonathan."

Mr. Witherington rang the bell, and Jonathan made his appearance.

"What is all this, Jonathan ?" said he ; "cook angry—Mary crying—both going away—what's it all about ?"

"Why, sir, they were told by William that it was your positive order that the two black people were to sleep with them ; and I believe he told Mary that the man was to sleep with her."

"Confound that fellow ! he's always at mischief ; you know, Jonathan, I never meant that."

"I thought not, sir, as it is quite contrary to custom," replied Jonathan.

"Well then, tell them so, and let's hear no more about it."

Mr. Witherington then entered into a consultation with his butler, and acceded to the arrangements proposed by him. The parties arrived in due time, and were properly accommodated. Master Edward was not troubled with the stomach-ache, neither did he wake Mr. Witherington at five o'clock in the morning ; and, after all, it was not very uncomfortable. But, although things were not quite so uncomfortable as Mr. Witherington had anticipated, still they were not comfortable ; and Mr. Witherington was so annoyed by continual skirmishes with his servants, complaints from Judy, in bad English, of the cook, who, it must be owned, had taken a prejudice against her and Coco, occasional illness of the child, *et cætera*, that he found his house no longer quiet and peaceable. Three months had now nearly passed, and no tidings of the boats had been received ; and Captain Maxwell, who came up to see Mr. Witherington, gave it as his decided opinion that they must have foundered in the

## THE PIRATE

gale. As, therefore, there appeared to be no chance of Mrs. Templemore coming to take care of her child, Mr. Witherington at last resolved to write to Bath, where his sister resided, and acquaint her with the whole story, requesting her to come and superintend his domestic concerns. A few days afterwards he received the following reply :—

“BATH, *August.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER ANTONY,—Your letter arrived safe to hand on Wednesday last, and I must say that I was not a little surprised at its contents; indeed, I thought so much about it that I revoked at Lady Betty Blabkin’s whist-party, and lost four shillings and sixpence. You say that you have a child at your house belonging to your cousin, who married in so indecorous a manner. I hope what you say is true; but, at the same time, I know what bachelors are guilty of; although, as Lady Betty says, it is better never to talk or even to hint about these improper things. I cannot imagine why men should consider themselves, in an unmarried state, as absolved from that purity which maidens are so careful to preserve; and so says Lady Betty, with whom I had a little conversation on the subject. As, however, the thing is done, she agrees with me that it is better to hush it up as well as we can.

“I presume that you do not intend to make the child your heir, which I should consider as highly improper; and, indeed, Lady Betty tells me that the legacy-duty is ten per cent., and that it cannot be avoided. However, I make it a rule never to talk about these sort of things. As for your request that I will come up and superintend your establishment, I have advised with Lady Betty on the subject, and she agrees with me that, for the honour of the family, it is better that I should come, as it will save appearances. You are in a peck of troubles, as most men are who are free-livers, and are led astray by artful and alluring females. However, as Lady Betty says, ‘the least said, the soonest mended.’

## THE OLD MAID

"I will, therefore, make the necessary arrangements for letting my house, and hope to join you in about ten days; sooner, I cannot, as I find that my engagements extend to that period. Many questions have already been put to me on this unpleasant subject; but I always give but one answer, which is, that bachelors will be bachelors! and that, at all events, it is not so bad as if you were a married man: for I make it a rule never to talk about, or even to hint about these sort of things, for, as Lady Betty says, 'Men will get into scrapes, and the sooner things are hushed up the better.' So no more at present from your affectionate sister,

"MARGARET WITHERINGTON.

"P.S.—Lady Betty and I both agree that you are very right in hiring two black people to bring the child into your house, as it makes the thing look *foreign* to the neighbours, and we can keep our own secrets. M. W."

"Now, by all the sins of the Witheringtons, if this is not enough to drive a man out of his senses! Confound the suspicious old maid! I'll not let her come into this house. Confound Lady Betty, and all scandal-loving old tabbies like her! Bless me!" continued Mr. Witherington, throwing the letter on the table, with a deep sigh, "this is anything but comfortable."

But if Mr. Witherington found it anything but comfortable at the commencement, he found it unbearable in the sequel.

His sister Moggy arrived, and installed herself in the house with all the pomp and protecting air of one who was the saviour of her brother's reputation and character. When the child was first brought down to her, instead of perceiving at once its likeness to Mr. Templemore, which was very strong, she looked at it and at her brother's face with her only eye, and shaking her finger, exclaimed—

"Oh, Antony! Antony! and did you expect to deceive

## THE PIRATE

me?—the nose—the mouth exact—Antony, for shame! fie, for shame!”

But we must hurry over the misery that Mr. Witherington's kindness and benevolence brought upon him. Not a day passed—scarcely an hour, without his ears being galled with his sister's insinuations. Judy and Coco were sent back to America; the servants, who had remained so long in his service, gave warning one by one, and, afterwards, were changed as often almost as there was a change in the moon. She ruled the house and her brother despotically; and all poor Mr. Witherington's comfort was gone until the time arrived when Master Edward was to be sent to school. Mr. Witherington then plucked up courage, and after a few stormy months drove his sister back to Bath, and once more found himself comfortable.

Edward came home during the holidays, and was a great favourite; but the idea had become current that he was the son of the old gentleman, and the remarks made were so unpleasant and grating to him, that he was not sorry, much as he was attached to the boy, when he declared his intention to choose the profession of a sailor.

Captain Maxwell introduced him into the service; and afterwards, when, in consequence of ill-health and exhaustion, he was himself obliged to leave it for a time, he procured for his *protégé* other ships. We must, therefore, allow some years to pass away, during which time Edward Templemore pursues his career, Mr. Witherington grows older and more particular, and his sister Moggy amuses herself with Lady Betty's remarks, and her darling game of whist.

During all this period no tidings of the boats, or of Mrs. Templemore and her infant, had been heard; it was therefore naturally conjectured that they had all perished, and they were remembered but as things that had been.

## THE MIDSHIPMAN

### CHAPTER VI

#### THE MIDSHIPMAN

THE weather-side of the quarter-deck of H.M. frigate *Unicorn* was occupied by two very great personages: Captain Plumbton, commanding the ship, who was very great in width if not in height, taking much more than his allowance of the deck, if it were not that he was the proprietor thereof, and entitled to the lion's share. Captain P. was not more than four feet ten inches in height; but then he was equal to that in girth: there was quite enough of him, if he had only been *rolled out*. He walked with his coat flying open, his thumbs stuck into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, so as to throw his shoulders back and increase his horizontal dimensions. He also held his head well aft, which threw his chest and stomach well forward. He was the prototype of pomposity and good-nature, and he strutted like an actor in a procession.

The other personage was the first lieutenant, whom Nature had pleased to fashion in another mould. He was as tall as the captain was short—as thin as his superior was corpulent. His long, lanky legs were nearly up to the captain's shoulders; and he bowed down over the head of his superior, as if he were the crane to hoist up, and the captain the bale of goods to be hoisted. He carried his hands behind his back, with two fingers twisted together; and his chief difficulty appeared to be to reduce his own stride to the parrot march of the captain. His features were sharp and lean as was his body, and wore every appearance of a cross-grained temper.

He had been making divers complaints of divers persons, and the captain had hitherto appeared imperturbable. Captain Plumbton was an even-tempered man, who was satisfied with a good dinner. Lieutenant Markitall was an odd-tempered man, who would quarrel with his bread and butter.



## THE PIRATE

"Quite impossible, sir," continued the first lieutenant, "to carry on the duty without support."

This oracular observation, which, from the relative forms of the two parties, descended as it were from above, was replied to by the captain with a "Very true."

"Then, sir, I presume you will not object to my putting that man in the report for punishment?"

"I'll think about it, Mr. Markitall." This, with Captain Plumbton, was as much as to say, No.

"The young gentlemen, sir, I am sorry to say, are very troublesome."

"Boys always are," replied the captain.

"Yes, sir; but the duty must be carried on, and I cannot do without them."

"Very true—midshipmen are very useful."

"But I'm sorry to say, sir, that they are not. Now, sir, there's Mr. Templemore; I can do nothing with him—he does nothing but laugh."

"Laugh!—Mr. Markitall, does he laugh at you?"

"Not exactly, sir; but he laughs at everything. If I send him to the mast-head, he goes up laughing; if I call him down, he comes down laughing; if I find fault with him, he laughs the next minute: in fact, sir, he does nothing but laugh. I should particularly wish, sir, that you would speak to him, and see if any interference on your part——"

"Would make him cry—eh? better to laugh than cry in this world. Does he never cry, Mr. Markitall?"

"Yes, sir, and very unseasonably. The other day, you may recollect, when you punished Wilson the marine, whom I appointed to take care of his chest and hammock, he was crying the whole time; almost tantamount—at least an indirect species of mutiny on his part, as it implied——"

"That the boy was sorry that his servant was punished; I never flog a man but I'm sorry myself, Mr. Markitall."

"Well, I do not press the question of his crying—that I might look over; but his laughing, sir, I must beg that you

## THE MIDSHIPMAN

will take notice of that. Here he is, sir, coming up the hatchway. Mr. Templemore, the captain wishes to speak to you."

Now, the captain did not wish to speak to him, but, forced upon him as it was by the first lieutenant, he could do no less. So Mr. Templemore touched his hat, and stood before the captain, we regret to say, with such a good-humoured, sly, confiding smirk on his countenance, as at once established the proof of the accusation, and the enormity of the offence.

"So, sir," said Captain Plumbton, stopping in his perambulation, and squaring his shoulders still more, "I find that you laugh at the first lieutenant."

"I, sir?" replied the boy, the smirk expanding into a broad grin.

"Yes; you, sir," said the first lieutenant, now drawing up to his full height; "why, you're laughing now, sir."

"I can't help it, sir—it's not my fault; and I'm sure it's not yours, sir," added the boy demurely.

"Are you aware, Edward—Mr. Templemore, I mean—of the impropriety of disrespect to your superior officer?"

"I never laughed at Mr. Markitall but once, sir, that I can recollect, and that was when he tumbled over the messenger."

"And why did you laugh at him then, sir?"

"I always do laugh when any one tumbles down," replied the lad; "I can't help it, sir."

"Then, sir, I suppose you would laugh if you saw me rolling in the lee-scuppers?" said the captain.

"Oh!" replied the boy, no longer able to contain himself, "I'm sure I should burst myself with laughing—I think I see you now, sir."

"Do you, indeed! I'm very glad that you do not; though I'm afraid, young gentleman, you stand convicted by your own confession."

"Yes, sir, for laughing, if that is any crime; but it's not in the Articles of War."

"No, sir; but disrespect is. You laugh when you go to the mast-head."

## THE PIRATE

"But I obey the order, sir, immediately—do I not, Mr. Markitall?"

"Yes, sir, you obey the order; but, at the same time, your laughing proves that you do not mind the punishment."

"No more I do, sir. I spend half my time at the mast-head, and I'm used to it now."

"But, Mr. Templemore, ought you not to feel the disgrace of the punishment?" inquired the captain severely.

"Yes, sir, if I felt I deserved it I should. I should not laugh, sir, if *you* sent me to the mast-head," replied the boy, assuming a serious countenance.

"You see, Mr. Markitall, that he can be grave," observed the captain.

"I've tried all I can to make him so, sir," replied the first lieutenant; "but I wish to ask Mr. Templemore what he means to imply by saying, 'when he deserves it.' Does he mean to say that I have ever punished him unjustly?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy boldly; "five times out of six I am mast-headed for nothing—and that's the reason why I do not mind it."

"For nothing, sir! Do you call laughing nothing?"

"I pay every attention that I can to my duty, sir; I always obey your orders; I try all I can to make you pleased with me—but you are always punishing me."

"Yes, sir, for laughing, and, what is worse, making the ship's company laugh."

"They 'haul and hold' just the same, sir—I think they work all the better for being merry."

"And pray, sir, what business have you to think?" replied the first lieutenant, now very angry. "Captain Plumbton, as this young gentleman thinks proper to interfere with me and the discipline of the ship, I beg you will see what effect your punishing may have upon him."

"Mr. Templemore," said the captain, "you are, in the first place, too free in your speech, and, in the next place, too fond of laughing. There is, Mr. Templemore, a time for

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all things—a time to be merry, and a time to be serious. The quarter-deck is not the fit place for mirth.”

“I’m sure the gangway is not,” shrewdly interrupted the boy.

“No—you are right, nor the gangway; but you may laugh on the forecastle, and when below with your messmates.”

“No, sir, we may not; Mr. Markitall always sends out if he hears us laughing.”

“Because, Mr. Templemore, you’re always laughing.”

“I believe I am, sir; and if it’s wrong I’m sorry to displease you, but I mean no disrespect. I laugh in my sleep—I laugh when I awake—I laugh when the sun shines—I always feel so happy; but though you do mast-head me, Mr. Markitall, I should not laugh, but be very sorry, if any misfortune happened to you.”

“I believe you would, boy—I do indeed, Mr. Markitall,” said the captain.

“Well, sir,” replied the first lieutenant, “as Mr. Templemore appears to be aware of his error, I do not wish to press my complaint—I have only to request that he will never laugh again.”

“You hear, boy, what the first lieutenant says; it’s very reasonable, and I beg I may hear no more complaints. Mr. Markitall, let me know when the foot of that foretopsail will be repaired—I should like to shift it to-night.”

Mr. Markitall went down under the half-deck to make the inquiry.

“And, Edward,” said Captain Plumbton, as soon as the lieutenant was out of ear-shot, “I have a good deal more to say to you upon this subject, but I have no time now. So come and dine with me—at my table, you know, I allow laughing in moderation.”

The boy touched his hat, and with a grateful, happy countenance, walked away.

We have introduced this little scene, that the reader may form some idea of the character of Edward Templemore

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He was indeed the soul of mirth, good-humour, and kindly feelings towards others; he even felt kindly towards the first lieutenant, who persecuted him for his risible propensities. We do not say that the boy was right in laughing at all times, or that the first lieutenant was wrong in attempting to check it. As the captain said, there is a time for all things, and Edward's laugh was not always seasonable; but it was his nature, and he could not help it. He was joyous as the May morning; and thus he continued for years, laughing at everything—pleased with everybody—almost universally liked—and his bold, free, and happy spirit unchecked by vicissitude or hardship.

He served his time—was nearly turned back when he was passing his examination for laughing, and then went laughing to sea again—was in command of a boat at the cutting-out of a French corvette, and when on board was so much amused by the little French captain skipping about with his rapier, which proved fatal to many, that at last he received a pink from the little gentleman himself, which laid him on deck. For this affair, and in consideration of his wound, he obtained his promotion to the rank of lieutenant—was appointed to a line-of-battle ship in the West Indies—laughed at the yellow fever—was appointed to the tender of that ship, a fine schooner, and was sent to cruise for prize-money for the admiral, and promotion for himself, if he could, by any fortunate encounter, be so lucky as to obtain it.

## CHAPTER VII

### SLEEPER'S BAY

ON the western coast of Africa there is a small bay, which has received more than one name from its occasional visitors. That by which it was designated by the adventurous Portuguese, who first dared to cleave the waves of the Southern

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Atlantic, has been forgotten with their lost maritime pre-eminence; the name allotted to it by the woolly-headed natives of the coast has never, perhaps, been ascertained; it is, however, marked down in some of the old English charts as Sleeper's Bay.

The mainland which, by its curvature, has formed this little dent, on a coast possessing, and certainly at present requiring few harbours, displays, perhaps, the least inviting of all prospects; offering to the view nothing but a shelving beach of dazzling white sand, backed with a few small hummocks beat up by the occasional fury of the Atlantic gales—arid, bare, and without the slightest appearance of vegetable life. The inland prospect is shrouded over by a dense mirage, through which here and there are to be discovered the stems of a few distant palm-trees, so broken and disjointed by refraction that they present to the imagination anything but the idea of foliage or shade. The water in the bay is calm and smooth as the polished mirror; not the smallest ripple is to be heard on the beach, to break through the silence of nature; not a breath of air sweeps over its glassy surface, which is heated with the intense rays of a vertical noonday sun, pouring down a withering flood of light and heat; not a sea-bird is to be discovered wheeling on its flight, or balancing on its wings as it pierces the deep with its searching eye, ready to dart upon its prey. All is silence, solitude, and desolation, save that occasionally may be seen the fin of some huge shark, either sluggishly moving through the heated element, or stationary in the torpor of the mid-day heat. A sight so sterile, so stagnant, so little adapted to human life, cannot well be conceived, unless, by flying to extremes, we were to portray the chilling blast, the transfixing cold, and “close-ribbed ice” at the frozen poles.

At the entrance of this bay, in about three fathoms water, heedless of the spring cable which hung down as a rope which had fallen overboard, there floated, motionless as death, a vessel whose proportions would have challenged the unani-



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mous admiration of those who could appreciate the merits of her build, had she been anchored in the most frequented and busy harbour of the universe. So beautiful were her lines, that you might almost have imagined her a created being that the ocean had been ordered to receive, as if fashioned by the Divine Architect, to add to the beauty and variety of His works; for, from the huge leviathan to the smallest of the finny tribe—from the towering albatross to the boding petrel of the storm—where could be found, among the winged or finned frequenters of the ocean, a form more appropriate, more fitting, than this specimen of human skill, whose beautiful model and elegant tapering spars were now all that could be discovered to break the meeting lines of the firmament and horizon of the offing.

Alas! she was fashioned, at the will of avarice, for the aid of cruelty and injustice, and now was even more nefariously employed. She had been a slaver—she was now the far-famed, still more dreaded, pirate schooner, the *Avenger*.

Not a man-of-war which scoured the deep but had her instructions relative to this vessel, which had been so successful in her career of crime—not a trader in any portion of the navigable globe but whose crew shuddered at the mention of her name, and the remembrance of the atrocities which had been practised by her reckless crew. She had been everywhere—in the east, the west, the north, and the south, leaving a track behind her of rapine and of murder. There she lay in motionless beauty, her low sides were painted black, with one small, narrow riband of red—her raking masts were clean scraped—her topmasts, her cross-trees, caps, and even running-blocks, were painted in pure white. Awnings were spread fore and aft to protect the crew from the powerful rays of the sun; her ropes were hauled taut; and in every point she wore the appearance of being under the control of seamanship and strict discipline. Through the clear smooth water her copper shone brightly; and as you looked over her taffrail down into the calm blue sea, you

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could plainly discover the sandy bottom beneath her, and the anchor which then lay under her counter. A small boat floated astern, the weight of the rope which attached her appearing, in the perfect calm, to draw her towards the schooner.

We must now go on board, and our first cause of surprise will be the deception relative to the tonnage of the schooner, when viewed from a distance. Instead of a small vessel of about ninety tons, we discover that she is upwards of two hundred; that her breadth of beam is enormous; and that those spars, which appeared so light and elegant, are of unexpected dimensions. Her decks are of narrow fir planks, without the least spring or rise; her ropes are of Manilla hemp, neatly secured to copper belaying-pins, and coiled down on the deck, whose whiteness is well contrasted with the bright green paint of her bulwarks: her capstern and binnacles are cased in fluted mahogany, and ornamented with brass; metal stanchions protect the skylights, and the bright muskets are arranged in front of the mainmast, while the boarding-pikes are lashed round the mainboom.

In the centre of the vessel, between the fore and main masts, there is a long brass 32-pounder fixed upon a carriage revolving in a circle, and so arranged that in bad weather it can be lowered down and *housed*; while on each side of her decks are mounted eight brass guns of smaller calibre and of exquisite workmanship. Her build proves the skill of the architect; her fitting-out, a judgment in which nought has been sacrificed to, although everything has been directed by, taste; and her neatness and arrangement, that, in the person of her commander, to the strictest discipline there is united the practical knowledge of a thorough seaman. How, indeed, otherwise could she have so long continued her lawless yet successful career? How could it have been possible to unite a crew of miscreants, who feared not God nor man, most of whom had perpetrated foul murders, or had been guilty of even blacker iniquities? It was because he

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who commanded the vessel was so superior as to find in her no rivalry. Superior in talent, in knowledge of his profession, in courage, and, moreover, in physical strength—which in him was almost herculean—unfortunately he was also superior to all in villainy, in cruelty, and contempt of all injunctions, moral and Divine.

What had been the early life of this person was but imperfectly known. It was undoubted that he had received an excellent education, and it was said that he was of an ancient border family on the banks of the Tweed: by what chances he had become a pirate—by what errors he had fallen from his station in society, until he became an outcast, had never been revealed; it was only known that he had been some years employed in the slave-trade previous to his seizing this vessel and commencing his reckless career. The name by which he was known to the crew of the pirate vessel was "Cain," and well had he chosen this appellation; for, had not his hand for more than three years been against every man's, and every man's hand against his? In person he was about six feet high, with a breadth of shoulders and of chest denoting the utmost of physical force which, perhaps, has ever been allotted to man. His features would have been handsome had they not been scarred with wounds; and, strange to say, his eye was mild and of a soft blue. His mouth was well formed, and his teeth of a pearly white; the hair of his head was crisp and wavy, and his beard, which he wore, as did every person composing the crew of the pirate, covered the lower part of his face in strong, waving, and continued curls. The proportions of his body were perfect; but from their vastness they became almost terrific. His costume was elegant, and well adapted to his form; linen trousers, and untanned yellow leather boots, such as are made at the Western Isles; a broad-striped cotton shirt; a red Cashmere shawl round his waist as a sash; a vest embroidered in gold tissue, with a jacket of dark velvet, and pendent gold buttons, hanging over his left shoulder, after

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the fashion of the Mediterranean seamen ; a round Turkish skull-cap, handsomely embroidered, a pair of pistols, and a long knife in his sash, completed his attire.

The crew consisted in all of 165 men, of almost every nation ; but it was to be remarked that all those in authority were either Englishmen or from the northern countries ; the others were chiefly Spaniards and Maltese. Still there were Portuguese, Brazilians, negroes, and others, who made up the complement, which at the time we now speak of was increased by twenty-five additional hands. These were Kroumen, a race of blacks well known at present, who inhabit the coast near Cape Palmas, and are often employed by our men-of-war stationed on the coast to relieve the English seamen from duties which would be too severe to those who were not inured to the climate. They are powerful, athletic men, good sailors, of a happy, merry disposition, and, unlike other Africans, will work hard. Fond of the English, they generally speak the language sufficiently to be understood, and are very glad to receive a baptism when they come on board. The name first given them they usually adhere to as long as they live ; and you will now on the coast meet with a Blucher, a Wellington, a Nelson, &c., who will wring swabs, or do any other of the meanest description of work, without feeling that it is discreditable to sponsorials so grand.

It is not to be supposed that these men had voluntarily come on board of the pirate ; they had been employed in some British vessels trading on the coast, and had been taken out of them when the vessels were burnt, and the Europeans of the crews murdered. They had received a promise of reward, if they did their duty ; but, not expecting it, they waited for the earliest opportunity to make their escape.

The captain of the schooner is abaft with his glass in his hand, occasionally sweeping the offing in expectation of a vessel heaving in sight ; the officers and crew are lying down, or lounging listlessly about the decks, panting with the extreme heat, and impatiently waiting for the sea-breeze to

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fan their parched foreheads. With their rough beards and exposed chests, and their weather-beaten fierce countenances, they form a group which is terrible even in repose.

We must now descend into the cabin of the schooner. The fittings-up of this apartment are simple: on each side is a standing bed-place; against the after bulkhead is a large buffet, originally intended for glass and china, but now loaded with silver and gold vessels of every size and description, collected by the pirate from the different ships which he had plundered; the lamps are also of silver, and evidently had been intended to ornament the shrine of some Catholic saint.

In this cabin there are two individuals, to whom we shall now direct the reader's attention. The one is a pleasant-countenanced, good-humoured Krouman, who had been christened "Pompey the Great"; most probably on account of his large proportions. He wears a pair of duck trousers; the rest of his body is naked, and presents a sleek, glossy skin, covering muscles which an anatomist or a sculptor would have viewed with admiration. The other is a youth of eighteen, or thereabouts, with an intelligent, handsome countenance, evidently of European blood. There is, however, an habitually mournful cast upon his features; he is dressed much in the same way as we have described the captain, but the costume hangs more gracefully upon his slender, yet well-formed limbs. He is seated on a sofa, fixed in the fore part of the cabin, with a book in his hand, which occasionally he refers to, and then lifts his eyes from, to watch the motions of the Krouman, who is busy in the office of steward, arranging and cleaning the costly articles in the buffet.

"Massa Francisco, dis really fine ting," said Pompey, holding up a splendidly embossed tankard, which he had been rubbing.

"Yes," replied Francisco gravely; "it is indeed, Pompey."

"How Captain Cain come by dis?"

Francisco shook his head, and Pompey put his finger up to his mouth, his eyes, full of meaning, fixed upon Francisco.

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At this moment the personage referred to was heard descending the companion-ladder. Pompey recommenced rubbing the silver, and Francisco dropped his eyes upon the book.

What was the tie which appeared to bind the captain to this lad was not known; but, as the latter had always accompanied, and lived together with him, it was generally supposed that he was the captain's son; and he was as often designated by the crew as young Cain as he was by his Christian name of Francisco. Still it was observed that latterly they had frequently been heard in altercation, and that the captain was very suspicious of Francisco's movements.

"I beg I may not interrupt your conversation," said Cain, on entering the cabin; "the information you may obtain from a Krouman must be very important."

Francisco made no reply, but appeared to be reading his book. Cain's eyes passed from one to the other, as if to read their thoughts.

"Pray what were you saying, Mr. Pompey?"

"Me say, Massa Captain? me only tell young Massa dis very fine ting; ask where you get him—Massa Francisco no tell."

"And what might it be to you, you black scoundrel?" cried the captain, seizing the goblet, and striking the man with it a blow on the head which flattened the vessel, and at the same time felled the Krouman, powerful as he was, to the deck. The blood streamed, as the man slowly rose, stupefied and trembling from the violent concussion. Without saying a word, he staggered out of the cabin, and Cain threw himself on one of the lockers in front of the standing bed-place, saying, with a bitter smile, "So much for your intimates, Francisco!"

"Rather, so much for your cruelty and injustice towards an unoffending man," replied Francisco, laying his book on the table. "His question was an innocent one—for he



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knew not the particulars connected with the obtaining of that flagon."

"And you, I presume, do not forget them? Well, be it so, young man; but I warn you again—as I have warned you often—nothing but the remembrance of your mother has prevented me, long before this, from throwing your body to the sharks."

"What influence my mother's memory may have over you, I know not; I only regret that, in any way, she had the misfortune to be connected with you."

"She had the influence," replied Cain, "which a woman must have over a man when they have for years swung in the same cot; but that is wearing off fast. I tell you so candidly; I will not even allow her memory to check me, if I find you continue your late course. You have shown disaffection before the crew—you have disputed my orders—and I have every reason to believe that you are now plotting against me."

"Can I do otherwise than show my abhorrence," replied Francisco, "when I witness such acts of horror, of cruelty—cold-blooded cruelty, as lately have been perpetrated? Why do you bring me here? and why do you now detain me? All I ask is, that you will allow me to leave the vessel. You are not my father; you have told me so."

"No, I am not your father; but—you are your mother's son."

"That gives you no right to have power over me, even if you had been married to my mother; which——"

"I was not."

"I thank God; for marriage with you would have been even greater disgrace."

"What!" cried Cain, starting up, seizing the young man by the neck, and lifting him off his seat as if he had been a puppet; "but no—I cannot forget your mother." Cain released Francisco, and resumed his seat on the locker.

"As you please," said Francisco, as soon as he had re-

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covered himself; "it matters little whether I am brained by your own hand, or launched overboard as a meal for the sharks; it will be but one more murder."

"Mad fool! why do you tempt me thus?" replied Cain, again starting up, and hastily quitting the cabin.

The altercation which we have just described was not unheard on deck, as the doors of the cabin were open, and the skylight removed to admit the air. The face of Cain was flushed as he ascended the ladder. He perceived his chief mate standing by the hatchway, and many of the men, who had been slumbering abaft, with their heads raised on their elbows, as if they had been listening to the conversation below.

"It will never do, sir," said Hawkhurst, the mate, shaking his head.

"No," replied the captain; "not if he were my own son. But what is to be done?—he knows no fear."

Hawkhurst pointed to the entering port.

"When I ask your advice, you may give it," said the captain, turning gloomily away.

In the meantime, Francisco paced the cabin in deep thought. Young as he was, he was indifferent to death; for he had no tie to render life precious. He remembered his mother, but not her demise; that had been concealed from him. At the age of seven he had sailed with Cain in a slaver, and had ever since continued with him. Until lately, he had been led to suppose that the captain was his father. During the years that he had been in the slave-trade, Cain had devoted much time to his education; it so happened that the only book which could be found on board of the vessel, when Cain first commenced teaching, was a Bible belonging to Francisco's mother. Out of this book he learned to read; and, as his education advanced, other books were procured. It may appear strange that the very traffic in which his reputed father was engaged did not corrupt the boy's mind; but, accustomed to it from his infancy, he had

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considered these negroes as another species—an idea fully warranted by the cruelty of the Europeans towards them.

There are some dispositions so naturally kind and ingenuous that even example and evil contact cannot debase them : such was the disposition of Francisco. As he gained in years and knowledge, he thought more and more for himself, and had already become disgusted with the cruelties practised upon the unfortunate negroes, when the slave-vessel was seized upon by Cain and converted into a pirate. At first, the enormities committed had not been so great ; vessels had been seized and plundered, but life had been spared. In the course of crime, however, the descent is rapid : and as, from information given by those who had been released, the schooner was more than once in danger of being captured, latterly no lives had been spared ; and but too often the murders had been attended with deeds even more atrocious.

Francisco had witnessed scenes of horror until his young blood curdled : he had expostulated to save, but in vain. Disgusted with the captain and the crew, and their deeds of cruelty, he had latterly expressed his opinions fearlessly, and defied the captain ; for, in the heat of an altercation, Cain had acknowledged that Francisco was not his son.

Had any of the crew or officers expressed but a tithe of what had fallen from the bold lips of Francisco, they would have long before paid the forfeit of their temerity ; but there was a feeling towards Francisco which could not be stifled in the breast of Cain—it was the feeling of association and habit. The boy had been his companion for years ; and from assuetude had become, as it were, a part of himself. There is a principle in our nature which, even when that nature is most debased, will never leave us—that of requiring something to love, something to protect and watch over : it is shown towards a dog, or any other animal, if it cannot be lavished upon one of our own species. Such was the feeling which so forcibly held Cain towards Francisco ; such was the feeling which had hitherto saved his life.

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After having paced up and down for some time, the youth took his seat on the locker which the captain had quitted : his eye soon caught the head of Pompey, who looked into the cabin and beckoned with his finger.

Francisco rose, and, taking up a flagon from the buffet which contained some spirits, walked to the door, and, without saying a word, handed it to the Krouman.

"Massa Francisco," whispered Pompey, "Pompey say—all Kroumen say—suppose they run away, you go too? Pompey say—all Kroumen say—suppose they try to kill you? Nebber kill you while one Krouman alive."

The negro then gently pushed Francisco back with his hand, as if not wishing to hear his answer, and hastened forward on the berth deck.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ATTACK

IN the meantime, the sea-breeze had risen in the offing, and was sweeping along the surface to where the schooner was at anchor. The captain ordered a man to the cross-trees, directing him to keep a good look-out, while he walked the deck in company with his first mate.

"She may not have sailed until a day or two later," said the captain, continuing the conversation; "I have made allowance for that, and depend upon it, as she makes the eastern passage, we must soon fall in with her; if she does not heave in sight this evening by daylight, I shall stretch out in the offing; I know the Portuguese well. The sea-breeze has caught our craft; let them run up the inner jib, and see that she does not foul her anchor."

It was now late in the afternoon, and dinner had been sent into the cabin; the captain descended, and took his seat at the table with Francisco, who ate in silence. Once

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or twice the captain, whose wrath had subsided, and whose kindly feelings towards Francisco, checked for a time, had returned with greater force, tried, but in vain, to rally him into conversation, when "*Sail ho!*" was shouted from the mast-head.

"There she is, by G—d!" cried the captain, jumping from, and then, as if checking himself, immediately resuming, his seat.

Francisco put his hand to his forehead, covering his eyes as his elbow leant upon the table.

"A large ship, sir; we can see down to the second reef of her topsails," said Hawkhurst, looking down the skylight.

The captain hastily swallowed some wine from a flagon, cast a look of scorn and anger upon Francisco, and rushed on deck.

"Be smart, lads!" cried the captain, after a few seconds' survey of the vessel through his glass; "that's her: furl the awnings, and run the anchor up to the bows: there's more silver in that vessel, my lads, than your chests will hold; and the good saints of the churches at Goa will have to wait a little longer for their gold candlesticks."

The crew were immediately on the alert; the awnings were furled, and all the men, stretching aft the spring cable, walked the anchor up to the bows. In two minutes more the *Avenger* was standing out on the starboard tack, shaping her course so as to cut off the ill-fated vessel. The breeze freshened, and the schooner darted through the smooth water with the impetuosity of a dolphin after its prey. In an hour the hull of the ship was plainly to be distinguished; but the sun was near to the horizon, and before they could ascertain what their force might be, daylight had disappeared. Whether the schooner had been perceived or not, it was impossible to say; at all events, the course of the ship had not been altered, and if she had seen the schooner, she evidently treated her with contempt. On board the *Avenger*, they were not idle; the long gun in the centre had been

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cleared from the incumbrances which surrounded it, the other guns had been cast loose, shot handed up, and everything prepared for action, with all the energy and discipline of a man-of-war. The chase had not been lost sight of, and the eyes of the pirate captain were fixed upon her through a night-glass. In about an hour more the schooner was within a mile of the ship, and now altered her course so as to range up within a cable's length of her to leeward. Cain stood upon the gunwale and hailed. The answer was in Portuguese.

"Heave to, or I'll sink you!" replied he in the same language.

A general discharge from a broadside of carronades, and a heavy volley of muskets from the Portuguese, was the decided answer. The broadside, too much elevated to hit the low hull of the schooner, was still not without effect—the foretopmast fell, the jaws of the main-gaff were severed, and a large proportion of the standing as well as the running rigging came rattling down on her decks. The volley of musketry was more fatal: thirteen of the pirates were wounded, some of them severely.

"Well done, John Portuguese!" cried Hawkhurst; "by the holy poker! I never gave you credit for so much pluck."

"Which they shall dearly pay for," was the cool reply of Cain, as he still remained in his exposed situation.

"Blood for blood! if I drink it," observed the second mate, as he looked at the crimson rivulet trickling down the fingers of his left hand from a wound in his arm—"just tie my handkerchief round this, Bill."

In the interim, Cain had desired his crew to elevate their guns, and the broadside was returned.

"That will do, my lads: starboard; ease off the boomsheet; let her go right round, Hawkhurst—we cannot afford to lose our men."

The schooner wore round, and ran astern of her opponent.

The Portuguese on board the ship, imagining that the



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schooner, finding she had met with unexpected resistance, had sheered off, gave a loud cheer.

"The last you will ever give, my fine fellows!" observed Cain, with a sneer.

In a few moments the schooner had run a mile astern of the ship.

"Now then, Hawkhurst, let her come to and about; man the long gun, and see that every shot is pitched into her, while the rest of them get up a new foretopmast, and knot and splice the rigging."

The schooner's head was again turned towards the ship; her position was right astern, about a mile distant or rather more; the long 32-pounder gun amidships was now regularly served, every shot passing through the cabin windows, or some other part of the ship's stern, raking her fore and aft. In vain did the ship alter her course, and present her broadside to the schooner; the latter was immediately checked in her speed, so as to keep the prescribed distance at which the carronades of the ship were useless, and the execution from the long gun decisive. The ship was at the mercy of the pirate; and, as may be expected, no mercy was shown. For three hours did this murderous attack continue, when the gun, which, as before observed, was of brass, became so heated that the pirate captain desired his men to discontinue. Whether the ship had surrendered or not it was impossible to say, as it was too dark to distinguish: while the long gun was served, the foretopmast and main-gaff had been shifted, and all the standing and running rigging made good; the schooner keeping her distance, and following in the wake of the ship until daylight.

We must now repair on board of the ship: she was an Indiaman; one of the very few that occasionally are sent out by the Portuguese government to a country which once owned their undivided sway, but in which, at present, they hold but a few miles of territory. She was bound to Goa, and had on board a small detachment of troops, a new

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governor and his two sons, a bishop and his niece, with her attendant. The sailing of a vessel with such a freight was a circumstance of rare occurrence, and was, of course, generally bruited about long before her departure. Cain had, for some months, received all the necessary intelligence relative to her cargo and destination ; but, as usual with the Portuguese of the present day, delay upon delay had followed, and it was not until about three weeks previous that he had been assured of her immediate departure. He then ran down the coast to the bay we have mentioned that he might intercept her ; and, as the event had proved, showed his usual judgment and decision. The fire of the schooner had been most destructive ; many of the Indiaman's crew, as well as of the troops, had been mowed down one after another ; until at last, finding that all their efforts to defend themselves were useless, most of those who were still unhurt had consulted their safety, and hastened down to the lowest recesses of the hold to avoid the raking and destructive shot. At the time that the schooner had discontinued her fire to allow the gun to cool, there was no one on deck but the Portuguese captain and one old weather-beaten seaman who stood at the helm. Below, in the orlop-deck, the remainder of the crew and the passengers were huddled together in a small space : some were attending to the wounded, who were numerous ; others were invoking the saints to their assistance ; the bishop, a tall, dignified person, apparently nearly sixty years of age, was kneeling in the centre of the group, which was dimly lighted by two or three lanterns, at one time in fervent prayer, at another, interrupted, that he might give absolution to those wounded men whose spirits were departing, and who were brought down and laid before him by their comrades. On one side of him knelt his orphan niece, a young girl of about seventeen years of age, watching his countenance as he prayed, or bending down with a look of pity and tearful eyes on her expiring countrymen, whose last moments were gladdened by his holy offices. On the other side of the

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bishop stood the governor, Don Philip de Ribiera, and his two sons, youths in their prime, and holding commissions in the king's service. There was melancholy on the brow of Don Ribiera; he was prepared for, and he anticipated, the worst. The eldest son had his eyes fixed upon the sweet countenance of Teresa de Silva—that very evening, as they walked together on the deck, had they exchanged their vows—that very evening they had luxuriated in the present, and had dwelt with delightful anticipation on the future. But we must leave them and return on deck.

The captain of the Portuguese ship had walked aft, and now went up to Antonio, the old seaman, who was standing at the wheel.

"I still see her with the glass, Antonio, and yet she has not fired for nearly two hours; do you think any accident has happened to her long gun? if so, we may have some chance."

Antonio shook his head. "We have but little chance, I am afraid, my captain; I knew by the ring of the gun, when she fired it, that it was brass; indeed, no schooner could carry a long iron gun of that calibre. Depend upon it, she only waits for the metal to cool and daylight to return: a long gun or two might have saved us; but now, as she has the advantage of us in heels, we are at her mercy."

"What can she be—a French privateer?"

"I trust it may be so; and I have promised a silver candlestick to St. Antonio that it may prove no worse: we then may have some chance of seeing our homes again; but I fear not."

"What, then, do you imagine her to be, Antonio?"

"The pirate which we have heard so much of."

"Jesu protect us! we must then sell our lives as dearly as we can."

"So I intend to do, my captain," replied Antonio, shifting the helm a spoke.

The day broke, and showed the schooner continuing her

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pursuit at the same distance astern, without any apparent movement on board. It was not until the sun was some degrees above the horizon that the smoke was again seen to envelop her bows, and the shot crashed through the timbers of the Portuguese ship. The reason for this delay was, that the pirate waited till the sun was up to ascertain if there were any other vessels to be seen, previous to his pouncing on his quarry. The Portuguese captain went aft and hoisted his ensign, but no flag was shown by the schooner. Again whistled the ball, and again did it tear up the decks of the unfortunate ship: many of those who had reascended to ascertain what was going on, now hastily sought their former retreat.

"Mind the helm, Antonio," said the Portuguese captain; "I must go down and consult with the governor."

"Never fear, my captain; as long as these limbs hold together, I will do my duty," replied the old man, exhausted as he was by long watching and fatigue.

The captain descended to the orlop-deck, where he found the major part of the crew and passengers assembled.

"My lords," said he, addressing the governor and bishop, "the schooner has not shown any colours, although our own are hoisted. I am come down to know your pleasure. Defence we can make none; and I fear that we are at the mercy of a pirate."

"A pirate!" ejaculated several, beating their breasts, and calling upon their saints.

"Silence, my good people, silence," quietly observed the bishop; "as to what it may be best to do," continued he, turning to the captain, "I cannot advise; I am a man of peace, and unfit to hold a place in a council of war. Don Ribiera, I must refer the point to you and your sons. Tremble not, my dear Teresa; are we not under the protection of the Almighty?"

"Holy Virgin, pity us!" exclaimed Teresa.

"Come, my sons," said Don Ribiera, "we will go on deck

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and consult: let not any of the men follow us; it is useless risking lives which may yet be valuable."

Don Ribiera and his sons followed the captain to the quarter-deck, and with him and Antonio they held a consultation.

"We have but one chance," observed the old man, after a time; "let us haul down our colours as if in submission; they will then range up alongside, and either board us from the schooner, or from their boats; at all events, we shall find out what she is, and, if a pirate, we must sell our lives as dearly as we can. If, when we haul down the colours, she ranges up alongside, as I expect she will, let all the men be prepared for a desperate struggle."

"You are right, Antonio," replied the governor; "go aft, captain, and haul down the colours!—let us see what she does now. Down, my boys! and prepare the men to do their duty."

As Antonio had predicted, so soon as the colours were hauled down, the schooner ceased firing and made sail. She ranged up on the quarter of the ship, and up to her main peak soared the terrific black flag; her broadside was poured into the Indiaman, and before the smoke had cleared away there was a concussion from the meeting sides, and the bearded pirates poured upon her decks.

The crew of the Portuguese, with the detachment of troops, still formed a considerable body of men. The sight of the black flag had struck ice into every heart, but the feeling was resolved into one of desperation.

"Knives, men, knives!" roared Antonio, rushing on to the attack, followed by the most brave.

"Blood for blood!" cried the second mate, aiming a blow at the old man.

"You have it," replied Antonio, as his knife entered the pirate's heart, while, at the same moment, he fell and was himself a corpse.

The struggle was deadly, but the numbers and ferocity of

## THE CAPTURE

the pirates prevailed. Cain rushed forward followed by Hawkhurst, bearing down all who opposed them. With one blow from the pirate-captain, the head of Don Ribiera was severed to the shoulder; a second struck down the eldest son, while the sword of Hawkhurst passed through the body of the other. The Portuguese captain had already fallen, and the men no longer stood their ground. A general massacre ensued, and the bodies were thrown overboard as fast as the men were slaughtered. In less than five minutes there was not a living Portuguese on the bloody decks of the ill-fated ship.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CAPTURE

PASS the word for not a man to go below, Hawkhurst!" said the pirate-captain.

"I have, sir; and sentries are stationed at the hatchways. Shall we haul the schooner off?"

"No, let her remain; the breeze is faint already: we shall have a calm in half-an-hour. Have we lost many men?"

"Only seven, that I can reckon; but we have lost Wallace" (the second mate).

"A little promotion will do no harm," replied Cain; "take a dozen of our best men and search the ship, there are others alive yet. By-the-bye, send a watch on board of the schooner; she is left to the mercy of the Kroumen, and——"

"One who is better out of her," replied Hawkhurst.

"And those we find below——" continued the mate.

"Alive!"

"True; we may else be puzzled where to find that portion of her cargo which suits us," said Hawkhurst, going down the hatchway to collect the men who were plundering on the main deck and in the captain's cabin.



## THE PIRATE

"Here, you Maltese ! up, there ! and look well round if there is anything in sight," said the captain, walking aft.

Before Hawkhurst had collected the men and ordered them on board of the schooner, as usual in those latitudes, it had fallen a perfect calm.

Where was Francisco during this scene of blood ? He had remained in the cabin of the schooner. Cain had more than once gone down to him, to persuade him to come on deck and assist at the boarding of the Portuguese, but in vain—his sole reply to the threats and solicitations of the pirate was—

"Do with me as you please—I have made up my mind—you know I do not fear death—as long as I remain on board of this vessel, I will take no part in your atrocities. If you do respect my mother's memory, suffer her son to seek an honest and honourable livelihood."

The words of Francisco were ringing in the ears of Cain as he walked up and down on the quarter-deck of the Portuguese vessel, and, debased as he was, he could not help thinking that the youth was his equal in animal and his superior in mental courage. He was arguing in his own mind upon the course he should pursue with respect to Francisco, when Hawkhurst made his appearance on deck, followed by his men, who dragged up six individuals who had escaped the massacre. These were the bishop ; his niece ; a Portuguese girl, her attendant ; the supercargo of the vessel ; a sacristan ; and a servant of the ecclesiastic : they were hauled along the deck and placed in a row before the captain, who cast his eyes upon them in severe scrutiny. The bishop and his niece looked round, the one proudly meeting the eye of Cain, although he felt that his hour was come ; the other carefully avoiding his gaze, and glancing round to ascertain whether there were any other prisoners, and if so, if her betrothed was amongst them ; but her eye discovered not what she sought—it was met only by the bearded faces of the pirate crew, and the blood which bespattered the deck.

## THE CAPTURE

She covered her face with her hands.

"Bring that man forward," said Cain, pointing to the servant. "Who are you?"

"A servant of my lord the bishop."

"And you?" continued the captain.

"A poor sacristan attending upon my lord the bishop."

"And you?" cried he to a third.

"The supercargo of this vessel."

"Put him aside, Hawkhurst!"

"Do you want the others?" inquired Hawkhurst significantly.

"No."

Hawkhurst gave a signal to some of the pirates, who led away the sacristan and the servant. A stifled shriek and a heavy plunge in the water were heard a few seconds after. During this time the pirate had been questioning the supercargo as to the contents of the vessel, and her stowage, when he was suddenly interrupted by one of the pirates, who, in a hurried voice, stated that the ship had received several shot between wind and water and was sinking fast. Cain, who was standing on the slide of the carronade with his sword in his hand, raised his arm and struck the pirate a blow on the head with the hilt, which, whether intended or not, fractured his skull, and the man fell upon the deck.

"Take that, babbler, for your intelligence; if these men are obstinate, we may have worked for nothing."

The crew, who felt the truth of their captain's remark, did not appear to object to the punishment inflicted, and the body of the man was dragged away.

"What mercy can we expect from those who show no mercy even to each other?" observed the bishop, lifting his eyes to heaven.

"Silence!" cried Cain, who now interrogated the supercargo as to the contents of the hold—the poor man answered as well as he could—"the plate! the money for the troops—where are they?"

## THE PIRATE

"The money for the troops is in the spirit-room, but of the plate I know nothing; it is in some of the cases belonging to my lord the bishop."

"Hawkhurst! down at once to the spirit-room and see to the money; in the meantime I will ask a few questions of this reverend father."

"And the supercargo—do you want him any more?"

"No; he may go."

The poor man fell down on his knees in thankfulness at what he considered his escape: he was dragged away by the pirates, and it is scarcely necessary to add that in a minute his body was torn to pieces by the sharks, who, scenting their prey from a distance, were now playing in shoals around the two vessels.

The party on the quarter-deck were now (unperceived by the captain) joined by Francisco, who, hearing from the Krouman, Pompey, that there were prisoners still on board, and amongst them two females, had come over to plead the cause of mercy.

"Most reverend father," observed Cain, after a short pause, "you have many articles of value in this vessel?"

"None," replied the bishop, "except this poor girl; she is, indeed, beyond price, and will, I trust, soon be an angel in heaven."

"Yet is this world, if what you preach be true, a purgatory which must be passed through previous to arriving there, and that girl may think death a blessing compared to what she may expect if you refuse to tell me what I would know. You have good store of gold and silver ornaments for your churches—where are they?"

"They are among the packages entrusted to my care."

"How many may you have in all?"

"A hundred, if not more."

"Will you deign to inform me where I may find what I require?"

"The gold and silver are not mine, but are the property

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of that God to whom they have been dedicated," replied the bishop.

"Answer quickly; no more subterfuge, good sir. Where is it to be found?"

"I will not tell, thou blood-stained man; at least, in this instance, there shall be disappointment, and the sea shall swallow up those earthly treasures to obtain which thou hast so deeply imbrued thy hands. Pirate! I repeat it, I will not tell."

"Seize that girl, my lads!" cried Cain; "she is yours, do with her as you please."

"Save me! oh, save me!" shrieked Teresa, clinging to the bishop's robe.

The pirates advanced and laid hold of Teresa. Francisco bounded from where he stood behind the captain, and dashed away the foremost.

"Are you men?" cried he, as the pirates retreated. "Holy sir, I honour you. Alas! I cannot save you," continued Francisco mournfully. "Yet will I try. On my knees—by the love you bore my mother—by the affection you once bore me—do not commit this horrid deed. My lads!" continued Francisco, appealing to the pirates, "join with me and entreat your captain; ye are too brave, too manly, to injure the helpless and the innocent—above all, to shed the blood of a holy man, and of this poor trembling maiden."

There was a pause—even the pirates appeared to side with Francisco, though none of them dared to speak. The muscles of the captain's face quivered with emotion, but from what source could not be ascertained.

At this moment the interest of the scene was heightened. The girl who attended upon Teresa, crouched on her knees with terror, had been casting her fearful eyes upon the men which composed the pirate crew; suddenly she uttered a scream of delight as she discovered among them one that she well knew. He was a young man, about twenty five years of age, with little or no beard. He had been her lover

## THE PIRATE

in his more innocent days; and she, for more than a year, had mourned him as dead, for the vessel in which he sailed had never been heard of. It had been taken by the pirate, and, to save his life, he had joined the crew.

"Filippo! Filippo!" screamed the girl, rushing into his arms. "Mistress! it is Filippo; and we are safe."

Filippo instantly recognised her; the sight of her brought back to his memory his days of happiness and of innocence; and the lovers were clasped in each other's arms.

"Save them! spare them!—by the spirit of my mother! I charge you," repeated Francisco, again appealing to the captain.

"May God bless thee, thou good young man!" said the bishop, advancing and placing his hand upon Francisco's head.

Cain answered not; but his broad expanded chest heaved with emotion—when Hawkhurst burst into the group.

"We are too late for the money, captain; the water is already six feet above it. We must now try for the treasure."

This intelligence appeared to check the current of the captain's feelings.

"Now, in one word, sir," said he to the bishop, "where is the treasure? Trifle not, or, by Heaven——"

"Name not Heaven," replied the bishop; "you have had my answer."

The captain turned away, and gave some directions to Hawkhurst, who hastened below.

"Remove that boy," said Cain to the pirates, pointing to Francisco. "Separate those two fools," continued he, looking towards Filippo and the girl, who were sobbing in each other's arms.

"Never!" cried Filippo.

"Throw the girl to the sharks! Do you hear? Am I to be obeyed?" cried Cain, raising his cutlass.

Filippo started up, disengaged himself from the girl, and

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drawing his knife, rushed towards the captain to plunge it in his bosom.

With the quickness of lightning the captain caught his up-lifted hand, and, breaking his wrist, hurled him to the deck.

"Indeed!" cried he, with a sneer.

"You shall not separate us," said Filippo, attempting to rise.

"I do not intend it, my good lad," replied Cain. "Lash them both together and launch them overboard."

This order was now obeyed; for the pirates not only quailed before the captain's cool courage, but were indignant that his life had been attempted. There was little occasion to tie the unhappy pair together; they were locked so fast in each other's arms that it would have been impossible almost to separate them. In this state they were carried to the entering port, and cast into the sea.

"Monster!" cried the bishop, as he heard the splash, "thou wilt have a heavy reckoning for this."

"Now bring these forward," said Cain, with a savage voice.

The bishop and his niece were led to the gangway.

"What dost thou see, good bishop?" said Cain, pointing to the discoloured water, and the rapid motion of the fins of the sharks, eager in the anticipation of a further supply.

"I see ravenous creatures after their kind," replied the bishop, "who will, in all probability, soon tear asunder these poor limbs; but I see no monster like thyself. Teresa, dearest, fear not; there is a God, an avenging God, as well as a rewarding one."

But Teresa's eyes were closed—she could not look upon the scene.

"You have your choice; first torture, and then your body to those sharks for your own portion; and as for the girl, this moment I hand her over to my crew."

"Never!" shrieked Teresa, springing from the deck and plunging into the wave.

There was a splash of contention, the lashing of tails, until the water was in a foam, and then the dark colour gradually



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cleared away, and nought was to be seen but the pure blue wave and the still unsatiated monsters of the deep.

"The screws—the screws! quick! we'll have the secret from him," cried the pirate captain, turning to his crew, who, villains as they were, had been shocked at this last catastrophe. "Seize him!"

"Touch him not!" cried Francisco, standing on the hammock nettings; "touch him not! if you are men."

Boiling with rage, Cain let go the arm of the bishop, drew his pistol, and levelled it at Francisco. The bishop threw up the arm of Cain as he fired; saw that he had missed his aim, and clasping his hands, raised his eyes to heaven in thankfulness at Francisco's escape. In this position he was collared by Hawkhurst, whose anger overcame his discretion, and who hurled him through the entering port into the sea.

"Officious fool!" muttered Cain, when he perceived what the mate had done. Then, recollecting himself, he cried, "Seize that boy and bring him here."

One or two of the crew advanced to obey his orders; but Pompey and the Kroumèn, who had been attentive to what was going on, had collected round Francisco, and a scuffle ensued. The pirates, not being very determined, nor very anxious to take Francisco, allowed him to be hurried away in the centre of the Kroumen, who bore him safely to the schooner.

In the meantime Hawkhurst, and the major part of the men on board of the ship, had been tearing up the hold to obtain the valuables, but without success. The water had now reached above the orlop-deck, and all further attempts were unavailing. The ship was settling fast, and it became necessary to quit her, and haul off the schooner, that she might not be endangered by the vortex of the sinking vessel. Cain and Hawkhurst, with their disappointed crew, returned on board the schooner, and before they had succeeded in detaching the two vessels a cable's length, the ship went down with all the treasure so coveted. The indignation and



“‘Never!’ shrieked Teresa, springing from the deck and plunging into the wave.”



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rage which were expressed by the captain as he rapidly walked the deck in company with his first mate—his violent gesticulations—proved to the crew that there was mischief brewing. Francisco did not return to the cabin ; he remained forward with the Kroumen, who, although but a small portion of the ship's company, were known to be resolute and not to be despised. It was also observed that all of them had supplied themselves with arms, and were collected forward, huddled together, watching every motion and manœuvre, and talking rapidly in their own language. The schooner was now steered to the north-westward under all press of sail. The sun again disappeared, but Francisco returned not to the cabin—he went below, surrounded by the Kroumen, who appeared to have devoted themselves to his protection. Once during the night Hawkhurst summoned them on deck, but they obeyed not the order ; and to the expostulation of the boatswain's mate, who came down, they made no reply. But there were many of the pirates in the schooner who appeared to coincide with the Kroumen in their regard for Francisco. There are shades of villainy in the most profligate of societies ; and among the pirate's crew some were not yet wholly debased. The foul murder of a holy man—the cruel fate of the beautiful Teresa—and the barbarous conduct of the captain towards Filippo and his mistress, were deeds of an atrocity to which even the most hardened were unaccustomed. Francisco's pleadings in behalf of mercy were at least no crime ; and yet they considered that Francisco was doomed. He was a general favourite ; the worst-disposed of the pirates, with the exception of Hawkhurst, if they did not love, could not forbear respecting him ; although at the same time they felt that if Francisco remained on board the power even of Cain himself would soon be destroyed. For many months Hawkhurst, who detested the youth, had been most earnest that he should be sent out of the schooner. Now he pressed the captain for his removal in any way, as necessary for their mutual safety, pointing out

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to Cain the conduct of the Kroumen, and his fears that a large proportion of the ship's company were equally disaffected. Cain felt the truth of Hawkhurst's representation, and he went down to his cabin to consider upon what should be done.

It was past midnight when Cain, worn-out with the conflicting passions of the day, fell into an uneasy slumber. His dreams were of Francisco's mother—she appeared to him pleading for her son, and Cain "babbled in his sleep." At this time Francisco, with Pompey, had softly crawled aft, that they might obtain, if they found the captain asleep, the pistols of Francisco, with some ammunition. Pompey slipped in first, and started back when he heard the captain's voice. They remained at the cabin door listening. "No—no," muttered Cain, "he must die—unless—plead not, woman!—I know I murdered thee—plead not, he dies!"

In one of the sockets of the silver lamp there was a lighted wick, the rays of which were sufficient to afford a dim view of the cabin. Francisco, overhearing the words of Cain, stepped in, and walked up to the side of the bed. "Boy! plead not," continued Cain, lying on his back and breathing heavily—"plead not—woman!—to-morrow he dies." A pause ensued, as if the sleeping man was listening to a reply. "Yes; as I murdered thee, so will I murder him."

"Wretch!" said Francisco, in a low, solemn voice, "didst thou kill my mother?"

"I did—I did!" responded Cain, still sleeping.

"And why?" continued Francisco, who, at this acknowledgment on the part of the sleeping captain, was careless of discovery.

"In my mood she vexed me," answered Cain.

"Fiend; thou hast then confessed it!" cried Francisco in a loud voice, which awoke the captain, who started up; but before his senses were well recovered, or his eyes open so as to distinguish their forms, Pompey struck out the light, and all was darkness: he then put his hand to Francisco's mouth, and led him out of the cabin.

## THE CAPTURE

"Who's there?—who's there?" cried Cain.

The officer in charge of the deck hastened down. "Did you call, sir?"

"Call!" repeated the captain. "I thought there was some one in the cabin. I want a light—that's all," continued he, recovering himself, as he wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead.

In the meantime Francisco, with Pompey, had gained his former place of refuge with the Kroumen. The feelings of the young man changed from agony to revenge; his object in returning to the cabin to recover his weapons had been frustrated, but his determination now was to take the life of the captain if he possibly could. The following morning the Kroumen again refused to work or go on deck; and the state of affairs was reported by Hawkhurst to his chief. The mate now assumed another tone; for he had sounded not the majority but the most steady and influential men on board, who, like himself, were veterans in crime.

"It must be, sir; or you will no longer command this vessel. I am desired to say so."

"Indeed!" replied Cain, with a sneer. "Perhaps you have already chosen my successor?"

Hawkhurst perceived that he had lost ground, and he changed his manner. "I speak but for yourself: if you do not command this vessel I shall not remain in her; if you quit her, I quit also; and we must find another."

Cain was pacified, and the subject was not renewed.

"Turn the hands up," at last said the captain. The pirate crew assembled aft.

"My lads, I am sorry that our laws oblige me to make an example; but mutiny and disaffection must be punished. I am equally bound as yourselves by the laws which we have laid down for our guidance while we sail together; and you may believe that in doing my duty in this instance I am guided by a sense of justice, and wish to prove to you that I am worthy to command. Francisco has been with me



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since he was a child ; he has lived with me, and it is painful to part with him ; but I am here to see that our laws are put in force. He has been guilty of repeated mutiny and contempt, and—he must die.”

“Death ! death !” cried several of the pirates in advance ; “death and justice !”

“No more murder !” said several voices from behind.

“Who’s that that speaks ?”

“Too much murder yesterday—no more murder !” shouted several voices at once.

“Let the men come forward who speak,” cried Cain, with a withering look. No one obeyed this order. “Down, then, my men ! and bring up Francisco.”

The whole of the pirate crew hastened below, but with different intentions ; some were determined to seize Francisco, and hand him over to death—others to protect him. A confused noise was heard—the shouts of “*Down and seize him !*” opposed to those of “*No murder ! No murder !*”

Both parties had snatched up their arms ; those who sided with Francisco joined the Kroumen, whilst the others also hastened below to bring him on deck. A slight scuffle ensued before they separated, and ascertained by the separation the strength of the contending parties. Francisco, perceiving that he was joined by a large body, desired his men to follow him, went up the fore-ladder, and took possession of the fore-castle. The pirates on his side supplied him with arms, and Francisco stood forward in advance. Hawkhurst, and those of the crew who sided with him, had retreated to the quarter-deck, and rallied round the captain, who leaned against the capstern. They were then able to estimate their comparative strength. The number, on the whole, preponderated in favour of Francisco ; but on the captain’s side were the older and more athletic of the crew, and, we may add, the more determined. Still, the captain and Hawkhurst perceived the danger of their situation, and it was thought advisable to parley for the present, and wreak

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their vengeance hereafter. For a few minutes there was a low consultation between both parties ; at last Cain advanced.

"My lads," said he, addressing those who had rallied round Francisco, "I little thought that a firebrand would have been cast in this vessel to set us all at variance. It was my duty, as your captain, to propose that our laws should be enforced. Tell me, now, what is it that you wish. I am only here as your captain, and to take the sense of the whole crew. I have no animosity against that lad ; I have loved him—I have cherished him ; but like a viper, he has stung me in return. Instead of being in arms against each other, ought we not to be united ? I have, therefore, one proposal to make to you, which is this : let the sentence go by vote, or ballot, if you please ; and whatever the sentence may be, I shall be guided by it. Can I say more ?"

"My lads," replied Francisco, when the captain had done speaking, "I think it better that you should accept this proposal rather than that blood should be shed. My life is of little consequence ; say, then, will you agree to the vote, and submit to those laws, which, as the captain says, have been laid down to regulate the discipline of the vessel ?"

The pirates on Francisco's side looked round among their party, and, perceiving that they were the most numerous, consented to the proposal ; but Hawkhurst stepped forward and observed : "Of course the Kroumen can have no votes, as they do not belong to the vessel."

This objection was important, as they amounted to twenty-five, and, after that number was deducted, in all probability, Francisco's adherents would have been in the minority. The pirates with Francisco objected, and again assumed the attitude of defence.

"One moment," said Francisco, stepping in advance ; "before this point is settled, I wish to take the sense of all of you as to another of your laws. I ask you, Hawkhurst, and all who are now opposed to me, whether you have not one law, which is *Blood for blood* ?"

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"Yes—yes," shouted all the pirates.

"Then let your captain stand forward, and answer to my charge, if he dares."

Cain curled his lip in derision, and walked within two yards of Francisco.

"Well, boy, I'm here ; and what is your charge ?"

"First—I ask you, Captain Cain, who are so anxious that the laws should be enforced, whether you acknowledge that 'Blood for blood' is a just law ?"

"Most just : and, when shed, the party who revenges is not amenable."

"'Tis well : then, villain that thou art, answer—Didst thou not murder my mother ?"

Cain, at this accusation, started.

"Answer the truth, or lie like a recreant !" repeated Francisco. "Did you not murder my mother ?"

The captain's lips and the muscles of his face quivered, but he did not reply.

"*Blood for blood !*" cried Francisco, as he fired his pistol at Cain, who staggered, and fell on the deck.

Hawkhurst and several of the pirates hastened to the captain, and raised him.

"She must have told him last night," said Cain, speaking with difficulty, as the blood flowed from the wound.

"He told me so himself," said Francisco, turning round to those who stood by him.

Cain was taken down into the cabin. On examination, his wound was not mortal, although the loss of blood had been rapid and very great. In a few minutes Hawkhurst joined the party on the quarter-deck. He found that the tide had turned more in Francisco's favour than he had expected ; the law of "Blood for blood" was held most sacred : indeed, it was but the knowledge that it was solemnly recognised, and that, if one pirate wounded another, the other was at liberty to take his life, without punishment, which prevented constant affrays between parties, whose knives would otherwise have

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been the answer to every affront. It was a more debased law of duelling, which kept such profligate associates on good terms. Finding, therefore, that this feeling predominated, even among those who were opposed to Francisco on the other question, Hawkhurst thought it advisable to parley.

"Hawkhurst," said Francisco, "I have but one request to make, which, if complied with, will put an end to this contention; it is, that you will put me on shore at the first land that we make. If you and your party engage to do this, I will desire those who support me to return to their obedience."

"I grant it," replied Hawkhurst; "and so will the others. Will you not, my men?"

"Agreed—agreed upon all sides," cried the pirates, throwing away their weapons, and mingling with each other as if they had never been opposed.

There is an old saying that there is honour amongst thieves; and so it often proves. Every man in the vessel knew that this agreement would be strictly adhered to; and Francisco now walked the deck with as much composure as if nothing had occurred.

Hawkhurst, who was aware that he must fulfil his promise, carefully examined the charts when he went down below, came up and altered the course of the schooner two points more to the northward. The next morning he was up at the mast-head nearly half-an-hour, when he descended and again altered the course. By nine o'clock a low sandy island appeared on the lee bow; when within half a mile of it he ordered the schooner to be hove-to, and lowered down the small boat from the stern. He then turned the hands up. "My lads, we must keep our promise, to put Francisco on shore at the first land which we made. There it is!" And a malicious smile played on the miscreant's features as he pointed out to them the barren sand-bank, which promised nothing but starvation and a lingering death. Several of the crew murmured; but Hawkhurst was supported by his own

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party, and had, moreover, taken the precaution quietly to remove all the arms, with the exception of those with which his adherents were provided.

"An agreement is an agreement; it is what he requested himself, and we promised to perform. Send for Francisco."

"I am here, Hawkhurst; and I tell you candidly, that, desolate as is that barren spot, I prefer it to remaining in your company. I will bring my chest up immediately."

"No—no; that was not a part of the agreement," cried Hawkhurst.

"Every man here has a right to his own property. I appeal to the whole of the crew."

"True—true," replied the pirates; and Hawkhurst found himself again in the minority.

"Be it so."

The chest of Francisco was handed into the boat.

"Is that all?" cried Hawkhurst.

"My lads, am I to have no provisions or water?" inquired Francisco.

"No," replied Hawkhurst.

"Yes—yes," cried most of the pirates.

Hawkhurst did not dare put it to the vote; he turned sulkily away. The Kroumen brought up two breakers of water, and some pieces of pork.

"Here, massa," said Pompey, putting into Francisco's hand a fishing-line with hooks.

"Thank you, Pompey; but I had forgot—that book in the cabin—you know which I mean."

Pompey nodded his head, and went below; but it was some time before he returned, during which Hawkhurst became impatient. It was a very small boat which had been lowered down; it had a lug-sail and two pair of sculls in it, and was quite full when Francisco's chest and the other articles had been put in.

"Come! I have no time to wait," said Hawkhurst; "in the boat!"

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Francisco shook hands with many of the crew, and wished all of them farewell. Indeed, now that they beheld the poor lad about to be cast on a desolate island, even those most opposed to him felt some emotions of pity. Although they acknowledged that his absence was necessary, yet they knew his determined courage; and with them that quality was always a strong appeal.

"Who will row this lad ashore, and bring the boat off?"

"Not I," replied one; "it would haunt me ever afterwards."

So they all appeared to think, for no one volunteered. Francisco jumped into the boat.

"There is no room for any one but me; and I will row myself on shore," cried he. "Farewell, my lads! farewell!"

"Stop! not so; he must not have the boat—he may escape from the island," cried Hawkhurst.

"And why shouldn't he, poor fellow?" replied the men. "Let him have the boat."

"Yes—yes, let him have the boat;" and Hawkhurst was again overruled.

"Here, Massa Francisco—here de book."

"What's that, sir?" cried Hawkhurst, snatching the book out of Pompey's hand.

"Him, massa, Bible." Francisco waited for the book.

"Shove off!" cried Hawkhurst.

"Give me my book, Mr. Hawkhurst!"

"No!" replied the malignant rascal, tossing the Bible over the taffrail; "he shall not have that. I've heard say that *there is consolation in it for the afflicted.*"

Francisco shoved off his boat, and seizing his sculls, pushed astern, picked up the book, which still floated, and laid it to dry on the after-thwart of the boat. He then pulled in for the shore. In the meantime the schooner had let draw her fore-sheet, and had already left him a quarter of a mile astern. Before Francisco had gained the sand-bank she was hull-down to the northward.



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### CHAPTER X

#### THE SAND-BANK

THE first half-hour that Francisco was on this desolate spot he watched the receding schooner; his thoughts were unconnected and vague. Wandering through the various scenes which had passed on the decks of that vessel, and recalling to his memory the different characters of those on board of her, much as he had longed to quit her—disgusted as he had been with those with whom he had been forced to associate—still, as her sails grew fainter and fainter to his view, as she increased her distance, he more than once felt that even remaining on board of her would have been preferable to his present deserted lot. “No, no!” exclaimed he, after a little further reflection, “I had rather perish here, than continue to witness the scenes which I have been forced to behold.”

He once more fixed his eyes upon her white sails, and then sat down on the loose sands, and remained in deep and melancholy reverie until the scorching heat reminded him of his situation; he afterwards rose and turned his thoughts upon his present situation, and to what would be the measures most advisable to take. He hauled his little boat still farther on the beach, and attached the painter to one of the oars, which he fixed deep in the sand; he then proceeded to survey the bank, and found that but a small portion was uncovered at high water; for, trifling as was the rise of the tide, the bank was so low that the water flowed almost over it. The most elevated part was not more than fifteen feet above high-water mark, and that was a small knoll of about fifty feet in circumference.

To this part he resolved to remove his effects; he returned to the boat, and having lifted out his chest, the water, the provisions, with the other articles which he had obtained, he

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dragged them up, one by one, until they were all collected at the spot he had chosen. He then took out of the boat the oars and little sail, which, fortunately, had remained in her. His last object, to haul the little boat up to the same spot, was one which demanded all his exertion; but, after considerable fatigue, he contrived, by first lifting round her bow, and then her stern, to effect his object.

Tired and exhausted, he then repaired to one of the breakers of water and refreshed himself. The heat, as the day advanced, had become intolerable; but it stimulated him to fresh exertion. He turned over the boat, and contrived that the bow and stern should rest upon two little hillocks, so as to raise it above the level of the sand beneath it two or three feet; he spread out the sail from the keel above, with the thole-pins as pegs, so as to keep off the rays of the sun. Dragging the breakers of water and the provisions underneath the boat, he left his chest outside; and having thus formed for himself a sort of covering which would protect him from the heat of the day and the damp of the night, he crept in to shelter himself until the evening.

Although Francisco had not been on deck, he knew pretty well whereabouts he then was. Taking out a chart from his chest, he examined the coast to ascertain the probable distance which he might be from any prospect of succour. He calculated that he was on one of a patch of sand-banks off the coast of Loango, and about seven hundred miles from the Isle of St. Thomas—the nearest place where he might expect to fall in with a European face. From the coast he felt certain that he could not be more than forty or fifty miles at the most; but could he trust himself among the savage natives who inhabited it? He knew how ill they had been treated by Europeans; for, at that period, it was quite as common for the slave-trader to land and take away the inhabitants as slaves by force, as to purchase them in the more northern territories: still, he might be fortunate enough to fall in with some trader on

## THE PIRATE

the coast, as there were a few who still carried on a barter for gold-dust and ivory.

We do not know—we cannot conceive a situation much more deplorable than the one we have just described to have been that of Francisco. Alone—without a chance of assistance—with only a sufficiency of food for a few days, and cut off from the rest of his fellow-creatures, with only so much *terra firma* as would prevent his being swallowed up by the vast, unfathomable ocean, into which the horizon fell on every side around him! And his chance of escape how small! Hundreds of miles from any from whom he might expect assistance, and the only means of reaching them a small boat—a mere cockle-shell, which the first rough gale would inevitably destroy.

Such, indeed, were the first thoughts of Francisco; but he soon recovered from his despondency. He was young, courageous, and buoyant with hope; and there is a feeling of pride—of trust in our own resources and exertions, which increases and stimulates us in proportion to our danger and difficulty; it is the daring of the soul proving its celestial origin and eternal duration.

So intense was the heat that Francisco almost panted for sufficient air to support life, as he lay under the shade of the boat during the whole of that day; not a breath of wind disturbed the glassy wave—all nature appeared hushed into one horrible calm. It was not until the shades of night were covering the solitude that Francisco ventured forth from his retreat; but he found little relief; there was an unnatural closeness in the air—a suffocation unusual even in those climes. Francisco cast his eyes up to the vault of heaven, and was astonished to find that there were no stars visible—a grey mist covered the whole firmament. He directed his view downwards to the horizon, and that, too, was not to be defined; there was a dark bank all around it. He walked to the edge of the sand-bank; there was not even a ripple—the wide ocean appeared to be in a trance, in a state of lethargy or stupor.

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He parted the hair from his feverish brow, and once more surveying the horrible, lifeless, stagnant waste, his soul sickened, and he cast himself upon the sand. There he lay for many hours in a state bordering upon wild despair. At last he recovered himself, and, rising to his knees, he prayed for strength and submission to the will of Heaven.

When he was once more upon his feet, and had again scanned the ocean, he perceived that there was a change rapidly approaching. The dark bank on the horizon had now risen higher up; the opaqueness was everywhere more dense; and low murmurs were heard as if there was wind stirring aloft, although the sea was still glassy as a lake. Signs of some movement about to take place were evident, and the solitary youth watched and watched. And now the sounds increased, and here and there a wild thread of air—whence coming, who could tell? and as rapidly disappearing—would ruffle, for a second, a portion of the stagnant sea. Then came whizzing sounds and moans, and then the rumbling noise of distant thunder—loud and louder yet—still louder—a broad black line is seen sweeping along the expanse of water—fearful in its rapidity it comes!—and the hurricane burst, at once and with all its force, and all its terrific sounds, upon the isolated Francisco.

The first blast was so powerful and so unexpected that it threw him down, and prudence dictated to him to remain in that position, for the loose sand was swept off and whirled in such force as to blind and prevent his seeing a foot from him; he would have crawled to the boat for security, but he knew not in which direction to proceed. But this did not last; for now the water was borne up upon the strong wings of the hurricane, and the sand was rendered firm by its saturation with the element.

Francisco felt that he was drenched, and he raised his head. All he could discover was, that the firmament was mantled with darkness, horrible from its intensity, and that the sea was in one extended foam—boiling everywhere, and

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white as milk—but still smooth, as if the power of the wind had compelled it to be so; but the water had encroached, and one half the sand-bank was covered with it, while over the other the foam whirled, each portion chasing the other with wild rapidity.

And now the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain, mingled with the spray caught up by the hurricane, was dashed and hurled upon the forlorn youth, who still lay where he had been first thrown down. But of a sudden, a wash of water told him that he could there remain no longer: the sea was rising—rising fast; and before he could gain a few paces on his hands and knees, another wave, as if it chased him in its wrath, repeated the warning of his extreme danger, and he was obliged to rise on his feet and hasten to the high part of the sand-bank, where he had drawn up his boat and his provisions.

Blinded as he was by the rain and spray, he could distinguish nothing. Of a sudden he fell violently; he had stumbled over one of the breakers of water, and his head struck against his sea-chest. Where, then, was the boat? It was gone!—it must have been swept away by the fury of the wind. Alas, then all chance was over! and if not washed away by the angry waters, he had but to prolong his existence but a few days, and then to die. The effect of the blow he had received on his forehead, with the shock of mind occasioned by the disappearance of the boat, overpowered him, and he remained for some time in a state of insensibility.

When Francisco recovered, the scene was again changed: the wide expanse was now in a state of wild and fearful commotion, and the waters roared as loud as did the hurricane. The whole sand-bank, with the exception of that part on which he stood, was now covered with tumultuous foam, and his place of refuge was occasionally invaded, when some vast mass, o'erlording the other waves, expended all its fury even to his feet. Francisco prepared to die!

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But gradually the darkness of the heavens disappeared, and there was no longer a bank upon the horizon, and Francisco hoped—alas! hoped what?—that he might be saved from the present impending death to be reserved for one still more horrible; to be saved from the fury of the waves, which would swallow him up, and in a few seconds remove him from all pain and suffering, to perish for want of sustenance under a burning sun; to be withered—to be parched to death—calling in his agony for water; and as Francisco thought of this he covered his face with his hands, and prayed, “O God, Thy will be done! but in Thy mercy, raise, still higher raise the waters!”

But the waters did not rise higher. The howling of the wind gradually decreased, and the foaming seas had obeyed the Divine injunction—they had gone so far, but no farther! And the day dawned, and the sky cleared; and the first red tints, announcing the return of light and heat, had appeared on the broken horizon, when the eyes of the despairing youth were directed to a black mass on the tumultuous waters. It was a vessel, with but one mast standing, rolling heavily, and running before the gale right on for the sand-bank where he stood; her hull, one moment borne aloft and the next disappearing from his view in the hollow of the agitated waters. “She will be dashed to pieces!” thought Francisco; “she will be lost!—they cannot see the bank!” And he would have made a signal to her, if he had been able, to warn her of her danger, forgetting at the time his own desolate situation.

As Francisco watched, the sun rose bright and joyous over this scene of anxiety and pain. On came the vessel flying before the gale, while the seas chased her as if they would fain overwhelm her. It was fearful to see her scud—agonising to know that she was rushing to destruction.

At last he could distinguish those on board. He waved his hand, but they perceived him not; he shouted, but his voice was borne away by the gale. On came the vessel, as



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if doomed. She was within two cables' length of the bank when those on board perceived their danger. It was too late!—they had rounded her to—another, and another wave hurled her towards the sand. She struck!—her only remaining mast fell over the side, and the roaring waves hastened to complete their work of destruction and of death!

## CHAPTER XI

### THE ESCAPE

FRANCISCO'S eyes were fixed upon the vessel, over which the sea now broke with terrific violence. There appeared to be about eight or nine men on her deck, who sheltered themselves under the weather bulwarks. Each wave, as it broke against her side and then dashed in foam over her, threw her, with a convulsive jerk, still further on the sand-bank. At last she was so high up that their fury was partly spent before they dashed against her frame. Had the vessel been strong and well-built—had she been a collier coasting the English shores—there was a fair chance that she might have withstood the fury of the storm until it had subsided, and that by remaining on board the crew might have survived; but she was of a very different mould, and, as Francisco justly surmised, an American brig, built for swift sailing, very sharp, and, moreover, very slightly put together.

Francisco's eyes, as may easily be supposed, were never removed from the only object which could now interest him—the unexpected appearance and imminent danger of his fellow-creatures at this desolate spot. He perceived that two of the men went to the hatches and slid them over to leeward; they then descended, and although the seas broke over the vessel, and a large quantity of water must have poured into her, the hatches were not put on again by those who remained on deck. But in a few minutes this mystery

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was solved ; one after another, at first, and then by dozens, poured forth, out of the hold, the kidnapped Africans who composed her cargo. In a short time the decks were covered with them : the poor creatures had been released by the humanity of two English sailors, that they might have the same chance with themselves of saving their lives. Still, no attempt was made to quit the vessel. Huddled together, like a flock of sheep, with the wild waves breaking over them, there they all remained, both European and African ; and as the heavy blows of the seas upon the sides of the vessel careened and shook her, they were seen to cling, in every direction, with no distinction between the captured and their oppressors.

But this scene was soon changed ; the frame of the vessel could no longer withstand the violence of the waves, and as Francisco watched, of a sudden it was seen to divide amidships, and each portion to turn over. Then was the struggle for life ; hundreds were floating on the raging element and wrestling for existence, and the white foam of the ocean was dotted by the black heads of the negroes who attempted to gain the bank. It was an awful, terrible scene, to witness so many at one moment tossed and dashed about by the waves—so many fellow-beings threatened with eternity. At one moment they were close to the beach, forced on to it by some tremendous wave ; at the next, the receding water and the undertow swept them all back ; and of the many who had been swimming one half had disappeared to rise no more. Francisco watched with agony as he perceived that the number decreased, and that none had yet gained the shore. At last he snatched up the haulyards of his boat's sail which were near him, and hastened down to the spot to afford such succour as might be possible ; nor were his efforts in vain. As the seas washed the apparently inanimate bodies on shore, and would then have again swept them away to return them in mockery, he caught hold of them and dragged them safe on the bank, and thus did he continue

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his exertions until fifteen of the bodies of the negroes were spread upon the beach. Although exhausted and senseless they were not dead, and long before he had dragged up the last of the number, many of those previously saved had, without any other assistance than the heat of the sun, recovered from their insensibility.

Francisco would have continued his task of humanity, but the parted vessel had now been riven into fragments by the force of the waves, and the whole beach was strewn with her timbers and her stores, which were dashed on shore by the waters, and then swept back again by the return. In a short time the severe blows he received from these fragments disabled him from further exertion, and he sank exhausted on the sand ; indeed, all further attempts were useless. All on board the vessel had been launched into the sea at the same moment, and those who were not now on shore were past all succour. Francisco walked up to those who had been saved : he found twelve of them were recovered and sitting on their hams ; the rest were still in a state of insensibility. He then went up to the knoll where his chest and provisions had been placed, and, throwing himself down by them, surveyed the scene.

The wind had lulled, the sun shone brightly, and the sea was much less violent. The waves had subsided, and, no longer hurried on by the force of the hurricane, broke majestically and solemnly, but not with the wildness and force which, but a few hours before, they had displayed. The whole of the beach was strewn with the fragments of the vessel, with spars and water-casks ; and at every moment was to be observed the corpse of a negro turning round and round in the froth of the wave, and then disappearing.

For an hour did he watch and reflect, and then he walked again to where the men who had been rescued were sitting, not more than thirty yards from him ; they were sickly, emaciated forms, but belonging to a tribe who inhabited the coast, and who having been accustomed from their infancy

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to be all the day in the water, had supported themselves better than the other slaves, who had been procured from the interior, or the European crew of the vessel, all of whom had perished.

The Africans appeared to recover fast by the heat of the sun, so oppressive to Francisco, and were now exchanging a few words with each other. The whole of them had revived, but those who were most in need of aid were neglected by the others. Francisco made signs to them, but they understood him not. He returned to the knoll, and pouring out water into a tin pan from the breaker, brought it down to them. He offered it to one, who seized it eagerly; water was a luxury seldom obtained in the hold of a slave-vessel. The man drank deeply, and would have drained the cup, but Francisco prevented him, and held it to the lips of another. He was obliged to refill it three times before they had all been supplied: he then brought them a handful of biscuit and left them, for he reflected that, without some precautions, the whole sustenance would be seized by them and devoured. He buried half a foot deep, and covered over with sand, the breakers of water and the provisions, and by the time he had finished this task, unperceived by the negroes, who still squatted together, the sun had sunk below the horizon. Francisco had already matured his plans, which were, to form a raft out of the fragments of the vessel, and with the assistance of the negroes attempt to gain the mainland. He lay down, for the second night, on this eventful spot of desolation, and commending himself to the Almighty protection, was soon in a deep slumber.

It was not until the powerful rays of the sun blazed on the eyes of the youth that he awoke, so tired had he been with the anxiety and fatigue of the preceding day, and the sleepless harrowing night which had introduced it. He rose and seated himself upon his sea-chest: how different was the scene from that of yesterday! Again the ocean slept, the sky was serene, and not a cloud to be distinguished through-

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out the whole firmament; the horizontal line was clear, even, and well defined: a soft breeze just rippled over the dark blue sea, which now had retired to its former boundary, and left the sand-bank as extended as when first Francisco had been put on shore. But here the beauty of the landscape terminated: the foreground was horrible to look upon; the whole of the beach was covered with the timbers of the wreck, with water-casks and other articles, in some parts heaped and thrown up one upon another; and among them lay jammed and mangled the bodies of the many who had perished. In other parts there were corpses thrown up high and dry, or still rolling and turning to the rippling wave; it was a scene of desolation and of death.

The negroes who had been saved were all huddled up together, apparently in deep sleep, and Francisco quitted his elevated position and walked down to the low beach, to survey the means which the disaster of others afforded him for his own escape. To his great joy he found not only plenty of casks, but many of them full of fresh water, provisions also in sufficiency, and, indeed, everything that could be required to form a raft, as well as the means of support for a considerable time for himself and the negroes who had survived. He then walked up to them and called to them, but they answered not, nor even moved. He pushed them, but in vain; and his heart beat quick, for he was fearful that they were dead from previous exhaustion. He applied his foot to one of them, and it was not until he had used force, which in any other case he would have dispensed with, that the negro awoke from his state of lethargy and looked vacantly about him. Francisco had some little knowledge of the language of the Kroumen, and he addressed the negro in that tongue. To his great joy he was answered in a language which, if not the same, had so great an affinity to it that communication became easy. With the assistance of the negro, who used still less ceremony with his comrades, the remainder of them were awakened, and a palaver ensued.

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Francisco soon made them understand that they were to make a raft and go back to their own country ; explaining to them that if they remained there, the water and provisions would soon be exhausted, and they would all perish. The poor creatures hardly knew whether to consider him a supernatural being or not ; they talked among themselves ; they remarked at his having brought them fresh water the day before ; they knew that he did not belong to the vessel in which they had been wrecked, and they were puzzled.

Whatever might be their speculations they had one good effect, which was, that they looked upon the youth as a superior and a friend, and most willingly obeyed him. He led them up to the knoll, and, desiring them to scrape away the sand, supplied them again with fresh water and biscuit. Perhaps the very supply, and the way in which it was given to them, excited their astonishment as much as anything. Francisco ate with them, and, selecting from his sea-chest the few tools in his possession, desired them to follow him. The casks were collected and rolled up ; the empty ones arranged for the raft ; the spars were hauled up and cleared of the rigging, which was carefully separated for lashings ; the one or two sails which had been found rolled up on the spars were spread out to dry ; and the provisions and articles of clothing, which might be useful, laid together on one side. The negroes worked willingly and showed much intelligence ; before the evening closed everything which might be available was secured, and the waves now only tossed about lifeless forms, and the small fragments of timber which could not be serviceable.

It would occupy too much time were we to detail all the proceedings of Francisco and the negroes for the space of four days, during which they laboured hard. Necessity is truly the mother of invention, and many were the ingenious resources of the party before they could succeed in forming a raft large enough to carry them and their provisions, with a mast and sail well secured. At length it was accomplished ;



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and on the fifth day Francisco and his men embarked, and, having pushed clear of the bank with poles, they were at last able to hoist their sail to a fine breeze, and steer for the coast before the wind at the rate of about three miles an hour. But it was not until they had gained half a mile from the bank that they were no longer annoyed by the dreadful smell arising from the putrefaction of so many bodies, for to bury them all would have been a work of too great time. The last two days of their remaining on the island, the effluvia had become so powerful as to be a source of the greatest horror and disgust even to the negroes.

But before night, when the raft was about eight leagues from the sand-bank, it fell calm, and continued so for the next day, when a breeze sprang up from the south-east, to which they trimmed their sail with their head to the northward.

This wind, and the course steered, sent them off from the land, but there was no help for it; and Francisco felt grateful that they had such an ample supply of provisions and water as to enable them to yield to a few days' contrary wind without danger of want. But the breeze continued steady and fresh, and they were now crossing the Bight of Benin; the weather was fine and the sea smooth; the flying-fish rose in shoals and dropped down into the raft, which still forced its way through the water to the northward.

Thus did Francisco and his negro crew remain for a fortnight floating on the wide ocean, without any object meeting their view. Day after day it was the same dreary "sky and water," and by the reckoning of Francisco they could not be far from the land, when, on the fifteenth day, they perceived two sail to the northward.

Francisco's heart bounded with joy and gratitude to Heaven; he had no telescope to examine them, but he steered directly for them, and, about dark, he made them out to be a ship and a schooner hove-to.

As Francisco scanned them, surmising what they might be,

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the sun set behind the two vessels, and after it had sunk below the horizon their forms were, for a few minutes, delineated with remarkable precision and clearness. There could be no mistake. Francisco felt convinced that the schooner was the *Avenger*; and his first impulse was to run to the sweep with which they were steered, and put the head of the raft again to the northward. A moment's reflection determined him to act otherwise; he lowered down his sail that he might escape observation, and watched the motions of the vessels during the few minutes of light which remained. That the ship had been captured, and that her capture had been attended with the usual scene of outrage and violence, he had no doubt. He was now about four miles from them, and just as they were vanishing from his straining eyes he perceived that the schooner had made all sail to the westward. Francisco, feeling that he was then secure from being picked up by her, again hoisted his sail with the hope of reaching the ship, which, if not scuttled, he intended to remove on board of, and then make sail for the first port on the coast. But hardly had the raft regained her way when the horizon was lighted up, and he perceived that the pirates had set fire to the vessel. Then it was useless to proceed towards her; and Francisco again thought of putting the head of the raft to the northward, when the idea struck him, knowing the character and cruelty of the pirates, that there might be some unfortunate people left on board to perish in the flames. He therefore continued his course, watching the burning vessel; the flames increased in violence, mounting up to the masts and catching the sails one after another. The wind blew fresh, and the vessel was kept before the wind—a circumstance that assured Francisco that there were people on board. At first she appeared to leave the raft, but as her sails, one after another, were consumed by the element, so did she decrease her speed, and Francisco, in about an hour, was close to her and under her counter.

The ship was now one mass of fire from her bows to her

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mainmast ; a volume of flame poured from her main hold, rising higher than her lower masts, and ending in a huge mass of smoke carried by the wind ahead of her ; the quarter-deck was still free from fire, but the heat on it was so intense that those on board were all collected at the taffrail ; and there they remained, some violent, others in mute despair ; for the *Avenger's* people, in their barbarity, had cut away and destroyed all the boats to prevent their escape. From the light thrown round the vessel those on board had perceived the approach of Francisco to their rescue, and immediately that it was under the counter, and the sail lowered, almost all of them had descended by ropes, or the stern ladder, and gained a place in her. In a few minutes, without scarcely an exchange of a word, they were all out of the brig, and Francisco pushed off just as the flames burst from the cabin windows, darting out in a horizontal line like the tongues of fiery serpents. The raft, now encumbered with twelve more persons, was then steered to the northward ; and as soon as those who had been saved had been supplied with some water, which they so much needed, Francisco obtained the intelligence which he desired. The ship was from Carthage, South America ; had sailed from thence to Lisbon with a Don Cumanos, who had large property up the Magdalen river. He had wished to visit a part of his family at Lisbon, and from thence had sailed to the Canary Isles, where he also had property. In their way from Lisbon to South America they had been beaten by stress of weather to the southward, and afterwards had been chased by the *Avenger* ; being a very fast sailer she had run down several degrees before she had been captured. When the pirate took possession, and found that she had little or no cargo of value to them, for her hold was chiefly filled with furniture and other articles for the use of Don Cumanos, angry at their disappointment, they had first destroyed all their boats and then set fire to the vessel, taking care not to leave her until all chance of the fire being put out was hopeless. And thus

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had these miscreants left innocent and unfortunate people to perish.

Francisco heard the narrative of Don Cumanos, and then informed him in what manner he had left the schooner, and his subsequent adventures. Francisco was now very anxious to make the land, or obtain succour from some vessel. The many who were now on board, and the time that he had already been at sea, obliged him to reduce the allowance of water. Fortune favoured him after all his trials; on the third day a vessel hove in sight, and they were seen by her. She made sail for them, and took them all on board. It was a schooner trafficking on the coast for gold-dust and ivory; but the magnificent offers of Don Cumanos induced them to give up their voyage and run across the Atlantic to Carthagea. To Francisco it was of little moment where he went, and in Don Cumanos he had found a sincere friend.

“You have been my preserver,” said the Spaniard, “allow me to return the obligation—come and live with me.”

As Francisco was equally pleased with Don Cumanos, he accepted the offer; they all arrived safely at Carthagea, and from thence proceeded to his estate on the Magdalen river.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE LIEUTENANT

WHEN we last mentioned Edward Templemore we stated that he was a lieutenant of the admiral's ship on the West India station, commanding the tender. Now the name of the tender was the *Enterprise*: and it was singular that she was one of two schooners built at Baltimore, remarkable for their beauty and good qualities; yet how different were their employments! Both had originally been built for the slave-trade; now one hoisted the English pennant, and cruised

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as the *Enterprise*; the other threw out the black flag, and scoured the seas as the *Avenger*.

The *Enterprise* was fitted much in the same way as we have already described her sister vessel—that is, with one long brass gun amidships, and smaller ones for her broadside. But in the numbers of their crew there was a great disparity; the *Enterprise* not being manned with more than sixty-five English sailors, belonging to the admiral's ship. She was employed, as most admiral's tenders usually were, sometimes carrying a tender made for a supply of provisions, or a tender of services, if required, from the admiral; or, if not particularly wanted, with the important charge of a tender *billet-doux* to some fair friend. But this is a tender subject to touch upon. In the meantime it must be understood that she had the same commission to sink, burn, and destroy, as all other of his Majesty's vessels, if anything came in her way; but as she usually carried despatches, the real importance of which were, of course, unknown, she was not to go out of her way upon such service.

Edward Templemore did, however, occasionally go a little out of his way, and had lately captured a very fine privateer, after a smart action, for which he anticipated his promotion; but the admiral thought him too young, and therefore gave the next vacancy to his own nephew, who, the admiral quite forgot, was much younger.

Edward laughed when he heard of it upon his arrival at Port Royal; and the admiral, who expected that he would make his appearance pouting with disappointment, when he came up to the Penn to report himself, was so pleased with his good humour that he made a vow that Templemore should have the next vacancy; but this he also quite forgot, because Edward happened to be, at the time it occurred, on a long cruise—and “out of sight out of mind” is a proverb so well established, that it may be urged as an excuse for a person who had so many other things to think of as the admiral entrusted with the command of the West India station.

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Lieutenant Templemore had, in consequence, commanded the *Enterprise* for nearly two years, and without grumbling; for he was of a happy disposition, and passed a very happy sort of life. Mr. Witherington was very indulgent to him, and allowed him to draw liberally; he had plenty of money for himself or for a friend who required it, and he had plenty of amusement. Amongst other diversions, he had fallen most desperately in love; for, in one of his trips to the Leeward Isles (so called from their being to windward) he had succoured a Spanish vessel, which had on board the new Governor of Porto Rico, with his family, and had taken upon himself to land them on that island in safety; for which service the English admiral received a handsome letter, concluding with the moderate wish that his Excellency might live a thousand years, and Edward Templemore an invitation to go and see them whenever he might pass that way; which, like most general invitations, was as much a compliment as the wish which wound up the letter to the admiral. It did, however, so happen that the Spanish governor had a very beautiful and only daughter, carefully guarded by a duenna, and a monk who was the depository of all the sins of the governor's establishment; and it was with this daughter that Edward Templemore fell into the heresy of love.

She was, indeed, very beautiful; and, like all her countrywomen, was ardent in her affections. The few days that she was on board the schooner with her father, during the time that the *Enterprise* convoyed the Spanish vessel into port, were quite sufficient to ignite two such inflammable beings as Clara d'Alfarez and Edward Templemore. The monk had been left on board of the leaky vessel; there was no accommodation in the schooner for him or the duenna, and Don Felix de Maxos de Cobas de Manilla d'Alfarez was too busy with his cigar to pay attention to his daughter.

When they were landed, Edward Templemore was asked to their residence, which was not in the town, but at a lovely bay on the south side of the island. The town mansion was



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appropriated to business and the ceremony of the court: it was too hot for a permanent abode, and the governor only went there for a few hours each day.

Edward Templemore remained a short time at the island, and at his departure received the afore-mentioned letter from the father to the English admiral, and an assurance of unalterable fidelity from the daughter to the English lieutenant. On his return he presented the letter, and the admiral was satisfied with his conduct.

When ordered out to cruise, which he always was when there was nothing else to do, he submitted to the admiral whether, if he should happen to near Porto Rico, he could not leave an answer to the Spanish governor's letter; and the admiral, who knew the value of keeping up a good understanding with foreign relations, took the hint, and gave him one to deliver, if *convenient*. The second meeting was, as may be supposed, more cordial than the first on the part of the young lady; not so, however, on the part of the duenna and holy friar, who soon found out that their charge was in danger from heretical opinions.

Caution became necessary; and as secrecy adds a charm to an amour, Clara received a long letter and a telescope from Edward. The letter informed her that, whenever he could, he would make his appearance in his schooner off the south of the island, and await a signal made by her at a certain window, acknowledging her recognition of his vessel. On the night of that signal he would land in his boat and meet her at an appointed spot. This was all very delightful; and it so happened that Edward had four or five times contrived, during the last year, to meet Clara without discovery, and again and again to exchange his vows. It was agreed between them that when he quitted the station, she would quit her father and her home, and trust her future happiness to an Englishman and a heretic.

It may be a matter of surprise to some of our readers that the admiral should not have discovered the frequent visits

## THE LIEUTENANT

of the *Enterprise* to Porto Rico, as Edward was obliged to bring his log for examination every time that he returned ; but the admiral was satisfied with Edward's conduct, and his anxiety to cruise when there was nothing else for him to do. His logs were brought on shore to the admiral's secretary, carefully rolled and sealed up. The admiral's secretary threw the packages on one side, and thought no more of the matter, and Edward had always a ready story to tell when he took his seat at the admiral's dinner-table ; besides, he is a very unfit person to command a vessel who does not know how to write a log that will bear an investigation. A certain latitude is always allowed in every degree of latitude as well as longitude.

The *Enterprise* had been despatched to Antigua, and Edward thought this an excellent opportunity to pay a visit to Clara d'Alvarez : he therefore, upon his return, hove-to off the usual headland, and soon perceived the white curtain thrown out of the window.

"There it is, sir," said one of the midshipmen who was near him—for he had been there so often that the whole crew of the *Enterprise* were aware of his attachment—"she has shown her flag of truce."

"A truce to your nonsense, Mr. Warren," replied Edward, laughing ; "how came you to know anything about it?"

"I only judge by cause and effect, sir ; and I know that I shall have to go on shore and wait for you to-night."

"That's not unlikely ; but let draw the foresheet ; we must now get behind the headland."

The youngster was right : that evening, a little before dark, he attended his commander on shore, the *Enterprise* lying to with a lantern at her peak.

"Once more, dearest Clara !" said Edward, as he threw off her long veil and pressed her in his arms.

"Yes, Edward, once more—but I am afraid only once more ; for my maid, Inez, has been dangerously ill, and has confessed to Friar Ricardo. I fear much that, in her fright

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(for she thought that she was dying), she has told all. She is better now."

"Why should you imagine so, Clara?"

"Oh, you know not what a frightened fool that Inez is when she is ill! Our religion is not like yours."

"No, dear, it is not; but I will teach you a better."

"Hush, Edward, you must not say that. Holy Virgin! if Friar Ricardo should hear you! I think that Inez must have told him, for he fixes his dark eyes upon me so earnestly. Yesterday he observed to me that I had not confessed."

"Tell him to mind his own business."

"That is his business, and I was obliged to confess to him last night. I told him a great many things, and then he asked if that was all. His eyes went through me. I trembled as I uttered an untruth, for I said it was."

"I confess my sins but to my Maker, Clara! and I confess my love but to you. Follow my plan, dearest!"

"I will half obey you, Edward. I will not tell my love."

"And sins you have none, Clara; so you will obey me in all."

"Hush, Edward, you must not say that. We all have sins; and oh! what a grievous sin they say it is to love you, who are a heretic! Holy Virgin, pardon me! but I could not help it."

"If that is your only sin, dearest, I can safely give you absolution."

"Nay, Edward, don't joke, but hear me. If Inez has confessed, they will look for me here, and we must not meet again—at least not in this place. You know the little bay behind the rock, it is not much farther off, and there is a cave where I can wait: another time it must be there."

"It shall be there, dearest; but is it not too near the beach? will you not be afraid of the men in the boat, who must see you?"

"But we can leave the beach. It is Ricardo alone that I am in dread of, and the Donna Maria. Merciful Heaven!

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should my father know it all, we should be lost—be separated for ever!” and Clara laid her forehead on Edward’s shoulder, as her tears fell fast.

“There is nought to fear, Clara. Hush! I heard a rustling in those orange-trees. Listen!”

“Yes! yes!” whispered Clara hastily; “there is some one. Away! dear Edward, away!”

Clara sprang from his side, and hastened up the grove. Edward made his retreat, and, flying down the rocky and narrow path through the underwood, was soon on the beach and into his boat. The *Enterprise* arrived at headquarters, and Edward reported himself to the admiral.

“I have work for you, Mr. Templemore,” said the admiral; “you must be ready to proceed on service immediately. We’ve found your match.”

“I hope I may find her, sir,” replied the lieutenant.

“I hope so, too; for, if you give a good account of her, it will put another swab on your shoulder. The pirate schooner, which has so long infested the Atlantic, has been seen and chased off Barbadoes by the *Amelia*; but it appears that there is not a vessel in the squadron which can come near her unless it be the *Enterprise*. She has since captured two West Indiamen, and was seen steering with them towards the coast of Guiana. Now, I am going to give you thirty additional hands, and send you after her.”

“Thank you, sir,” replied Edward, his countenance beaming with delight.

“How soon will you be ready?” inquired the admiral.

“To-morrow morning, sir.”

“Very good. Tell Mr. Hadley to bring me the order for the men and your sailing orders, and I will sign them; but recollect, Mr. Templemore, you will have an awkward customer. Be prudent—brave I know you to be.”

Edward Templemore promised everything, as most people do in such cases; and before the next evening the *Enterprise* was well in the offing, under a heavy press of sail.

## THE PIRATE

### CHAPTER XIII

#### THE LANDING

THE property of Don Cumanos, to which he had retired with his family, accompanied by Francisco, extended from the mouth of, to many miles up, the Magdalen river. It was a fine alluvial soil, forming one vast strip of rich meadow, covered with numerous herds of cattle. The house was not a hundred yards from the banks of this magnificent stream, and a small but deep creek ran up to the adjacent buildings; for Don Cumanos had property even more valuable, being proprietor of a gold mine near the town of Jambrano, about eight miles farther up, and which mine had latterly become exceedingly productive. The ore was brought down the river in boats, and smelted in the outhouses near the creek to which we have just referred.

It will be necessary to observe that the establishment of the noble Spaniard was numerous, consisting of nearly one hundred persons, employed in the smelting-house or attached to the household.

For some time Francisco remained here happy and contented; he had become the confidential supervisor of Don Cumanos' household, proved himself worthy of a trust so important, and was considered as one of the family.

One morning, as Francisco was proceeding down to the smelting-house to open the hatches of the small decked boats which had arrived from Jambrano with ore, and which were invariably secured with a padlock by the superintendent above, to which Don Cumanos had a corresponding key, one of the chief men informed him that a vessel had anchored off the mouth of the river the day before, and weighed again early that morning, and that she was now standing off and on.

"From Carthagena, probably, beating up," replied Francisco.

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"Valga me Dios, if I know that, sir," said Diego. "I should have thought nothing about it; but Giacomo and Pedro, who went out to fish last night, as usual, instead of coming back before midnight, have not been heard of since."

"Indeed! that is strange. Did they ever stay so long before?"

"Never, sir; and they have fished together now for seven years."

Francisco gave the key to the man, who opened the locks of the hatches, and returned it.

"There she is!" cried the man; the head-sails making their appearance as the vessel opened to their view from the projecting point distant about four miles. Francisco directed his eye towards her, and, without further remark, hastened to the house.

"Well, Francisco," said Don Cumanos, who was stirring a small cup of chocolate, "what's the news this morning?"

"The *Nostra Senora del Carmen* and the *Aguilla* have arrived, and I have just unlocked the hatches. There is a vessel off the point which requires examination, and I have come for the telescope."

"Requires examination! Why, Francisco?"

"Because Giacomo and Pedro, who went fishing last night, have not returned, and there are no tidings of them."

"That is strange! But how is this connected with the vessel?"

"That I will explain as soon as I have had an examination of her," replied Francisco, who had taken up the telescope, and was drawing out the tube. Francisco fixed the glass against the sill of the window, and examined the vessel some time in silence.

"Yes! by the living God, it is the *Avenger*, and no other!" exclaimed he, as he removed the telescope from his eye.

"Eh?" cried Don Cumanos.

"It is the pirate vessel—the *Avenger*—I'll forfeit my life upon it! Don Cumanos, you must be prepared. I know that



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they have long talked of a visit to this quarter, and anticipate great booty, and they have those on board who know the coast well. The disappearance of your two men convinces me that they sent up their boats last night to reconnoitre, and have captured them. Torture will extract the information which the pirates require, and I have little doubt but that the attack will be made when they learn how much bullion there is at present on your premises."

"You may be right," replied Don Cumanos thoughtfully; "that is, provided you are sure that it is the pirate vessel."

"Sure, Don Cumanos! I know every timber and plank in her; there is not a rope nor a block but I can recognise. At the distance of four miles, with such a glass as this, I can discover every little variety in her rigging from other craft. I will swear to her," repeated Francisco, once more looking through the telescope.

"And if they attack, Francisco?"

"We must defend ourselves, and, I trust, beat them off. They will come in their boats, and at night. If they were to run in the schooner by daylight and anchor abreast of us, we should have but a poor chance. But they little think that I am here, and that they are recognised. They will attack this night, I rather think."

"And what do you then propose, Francisco?"

"That we should send all the females away to Don Teodoro's—it is but five miles—and call the men together as soon as possible. We are strong enough to beat them off if we barricade the house. They cannot land more than from ninety to one hundred men, as some must remain in charge of the schooner; and we can muster quite as many. It may be as well to promise our men a reward if they do their duty."

"That is all right enough; and the bullion we have here?"

"Here we had better let it remain; it will take too much time to remove it, and, besides, will weaken our force by the

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men who must be in charge of it. The outhouses must be abandoned, and everything which is of consequence taken from them. Fire them they will, in all probability. At all events we have plenty of time before us, if we begin at once."

"Well, Francisco, I shall make you commandant, and leave the arrangements to you, while I go and speak to Donna Isidora. Send for the men and speak to them; promise them rewards, and act as if you were ordering upon your own responsibility."

"I trust I shall prove myself worthy of your confidence, sir," replied Francisco.

"Carambo!" exclaimed the old Don, as he left the room; "but it is fortunate you are here. We might all have been murdered in our beds."

Francisco sent for the head men of the establishment, and told them what he was convinced they would have to expect; and he then explained to them his views. The rest were all summoned; and Francisco pointed out to them the little mercy they would receive if the pirates were not repulsed, and the rewards which were promised by Don Cumanos if they did their duty.

Spaniards are individually brave; and, encouraged by Francisco, they agreed that they would defend the property to the last.

The house of Don Cumanos was well suited to resist an attack of this description, in which musketry only was expected to be employed. It was a long parallelogram of stone walls, with a wooden veranda on the first floor,—for it was only one story high. The windows on the first story were more numerous, but at the basement there were but two, and no other opening but the door in the whole line of building. It was of a composite architecture, between the Morisco and the Spanish. If the lower part of the house, which was of stone, could be secured from entrance, the assailants would, of course, fight under a great disadvantage. The windows

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below were first secured by piling a heavy mass of stones in the interior of the rooms against them, rising to the ceiling from a base like the segment of a pyramid, extending to the opposite side of the chamber; and every preparation was made for effectually barricading the door before night. Ladders were then fixed to ascend to the veranda, which was rendered musket-proof nearly as high as its railings, to protect the men. The Donna Isidora, and the women of the establishment, were in the afternoon despatched to Don Teodoro's; and, at the request of Francisco, joined to the entreaties of Donna Isidora, Don Cumanos was persuaded to accompany them. The Don called his men, and telling them that he left Francisco in command, expected them to do their duty; and then shaking hands with him, the cavalcade was soon lost in the woods behind the narrow meadows which skirted the river.

There was no want of muskets and ammunition. Some were employed casting bullets, and others in examining the arms which had long been laid by. Before evening all was ready; every man had received his arms and ammunition; the flints had been inspected; and Francisco had time to pay more attention to the schooner, which had during the day increased her distance from the land, but was not again standing in for the shore. Half-an-hour before dusk, when within three miles, she wore round and put her head to the offing.

"They'll attack this night," said Francisco, "I feel almost positive: their yards and stay-tackles are up, all ready for hoisting out the long-boat."

"Let them come, señor; we will give them a warm reception," replied Diego, the second in authority.

It was soon too dark to perceive the vessel. Francisco and Diego ordered every man, but five, into the house; the door was firmly barricaded, and some large pieces of rock, which had been rolled into the passage, piled against it. Francisco then posted the five men down the banks of the river, at a

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hundred yards' distance from each other, to give notice of the approach of the boats. It was about ten o'clock at night when Francisco and Diego descended the ladder and went to examine their outposts.

"Señor," said Diego, as he and Francisco stood on the bank of the river, "at what hour is it your idea that these villains will make their attempt?"

"That is difficult to say. If the same captain commands them who did when I was on board of her, it will not be until after the moon is down, which will not be till midnight; but should it be any other who is in authority, they may not be so prudent."

"Holy Virgin! señor, were you ever on board of that vessel?"

"Yes, Diego, I was, and for a long while too; but not with my own good will. Had I not been on board I never should have recognised her."

"Very true, señor; then we may thank the saints that you have once been a pirate."

"I hope that I never was that, Diego," replied Francisco, smiling; "but I have been a witness to dreadful proceedings on board of that vessel, at the remembrance of which, even now, my blood curdles."

To pass away the time, Francisco then detailed many scenes of horror to Diego which he had witnessed when on board of the *Avenger*; and he was still in the middle of a narrative when a musket was discharged by the farthest sentinel.

"Hark, Diego!"

Another, and another, nearer and nearer to them, gave the signal that the boats were close at hand. In a few minutes the men all came in, announcing that the pirates were pulling up the stream in three boats, and were less than a quarter of a mile from the landing-place.

"Diego, go to the house with these men, and see that all is ready," said Francisco. "I will wait here a little longer; but do not fire till I come to you."

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Diego and the men departed, and Francisco was left on the beach alone.

In another minute the sound of the oars was plainly distinguishable, and Francisco's ears were directed to catch, if possible, the voices. "Yes," thought he, "you come with the intentions of murder and robbery, but you will, through me, be disappointed." As the boats approached, he heard the voice of Hawkhurst. The signal muskets fired had told the pirates that they were discovered, and that in all probability they would meet with resistance; silence was, therefore, no longer of any advantage.

"Oars, my lads!—oars!" cried Hawkhurst.

One boat ceased rowing, and soon afterwards the two others. The whole of them were now plainly seen by Francisco, at the distance of about one cable's length from where he stood; and the clear still night carried the sound of their voices along the water.

"Here is a creek, sir," said Hawkhurst, "leading up to those buildings. Would it not be better to land there, as, if they are not occupied, they will prove a protection to us if we have a hard fight for it?"

"Very true, Hawkhurst," replied a voice, which Francisco immediately recognised to be that of Cain.

"He is alive, then," thought Francisco, "and his blood is not yet upon my hands."

"Give way, my lads!" cried Hawkhurst.

The boats dashed up the creek, and Francisco hastened back to the house.

"Now, my lads," said he, as he sprang up the ladder, "you must be resolute; we have to deal with desperate men. I have heard the voices of the captain and the chief mate; so there is no doubt as to its being the pirate. The boats are up the creek and will land behind the out-buildings. Haul up these ladders, and lay them fore and aft on the veranda; and do not fire without taking a good aim. Silence! my men—silence! Here they come."

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The pirates were now seen advancing from the out-buildings in strong force. In the direction in which they came, it was only from the side of the veranda, at which not more than eight or ten men could be placed, that the enemy could be repulsed. Francisco therefore gave orders that as soon as some of the men had fired they should retreat and load their muskets, to make room for others.

When the pirates had advanced half-way to the house, on the clear space between it and the out-buildings, Francisco gave the word to fire. The volley was answered by another, and a shout from the pirates, who, with Hawkhurst and Cain at their head, now pressed on, but not until they had received a second discharge from the Spaniards, and the pirates had fired in return. As the Spaniards could not at first fire a volley of more than a dozen muskets at a time, their opponents imagined their force to be much less than it really was. They now made other arrangements. They spread themselves in a semicircle in front of the veranda, and kept up a continued galling fire. This was returned by the party under Francisco for nearly a quarter of an hour; and as all the muskets were now called into action, the pirates found out that they had a more formidable enemy to cope with than they had anticipated.

It was now quite dark, and not a figure was to be distinguished, except by the momentary flashing of the firearms. Cain and Hawkhurst, leaving their men to continue the attack, had gained the house, and a position under the veranda. Examining the windows and door, there appeared but little chance of forcing an entrance; but it immediately occurred to them that under the veranda their men would not be exposed, and that they might fire through the wooden floor of it upon those above. Hawkhurst hastened away, and returned with about half the men, leaving the others to continue their attack as before. The advantage of this manœuvre was soon evident. The musket-balls of the pirates pierced the planks, and wounded many of the Spaniards



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severely ; and Francisco was at last obliged to order his men to retreat into the house, and fire out of the windows.

But even this warfare did not continue ; for the supporting pillars of the veranda being of wood, and very dry, they were set fire to by the pirates. Gradually the flames wound round them, and their forked tongues licked the balustrade. At last the whole of the veranda was in flames. This was a great advantage to the attacking party, who could now distinguish the Spaniards without their being so clearly seen themselves. Many were killed and wounded. The smoke and heat became so intense in the upper story that the men could no longer remain there ; and, by the advice of Francisco, they retreated to the basement of the house.

"What shall we do now, señor ?" said Diego, with a grave face.

"Do ?" replied Francisco ; "they have burnt the veranda, that is all. The house will not take fire ; it is of solid stone : the roof indeed may ; but still here we are. I do not see that they are more advanced than they were before. As soon as the veranda has burnt down, we must return above, and commence firing again from the windows."

"Hark, sir ! they are trying the door."

"They may try a long while ; they should have tried the door while the veranda protected them from our sight. At soon as it is burnt, we shall be able to drive them away from it. I will go up again and see how things are."

"No, señor ; it is of no use. Why expose yourself now that the flames are so bright ?"

"I must go and see if that is the case, Diego. Put all the wounded men in the north chamber, it will be the safest, and more out of the way."

Francisco ascended the stone staircase, and gained the upper story. The rooms were filled with smoke, and he could distinguish nothing. An occasional bullet whistled past him. He walked towards the windows, and sheltered himself behind the wall between them.

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The flames were not so violent, and the heat more bearable. In a short time a crash, and then another, told him that the veranda had fallen in. He looked through the window. The mass of lighted embers had fallen down in front of the house, and had, for a time, driven away the assailants. Nothing was left of the veranda but the burning ends of the joists fixed in the wall above the windows, and the still glowing remains of the posts which once supported it.

But the smoke from below now cleared away, and the discharge of one or two muskets told Francisco that he was perceived by the enemy.

"The roof is safe," thought he, as he withdrew from the window; "and now I do not know whether the loss of the veranda may not prove a gain to us."

What were the intentions of the pirates it was difficult to ascertain. For a time they had left off firing, and Francisco returned to his comrades. The smoke had gradually cleared away, and they were able to resume their positions above; but as the pirates did not fire, they, of course, could do nothing, as it was only by the flashing of the muskets that the enemy was to be distinguished. No further attempts were made at the door or windows below; and Francisco in vain puzzled himself as to the intended plans of the assailants.

Nearly half-an-hour of suspense passed away. Some of the Spaniards were of opinion that they had retreated to their boats and gone away, but Francisco knew them better. All he could do was to remain above, and occasionally look out to discover their motions. Diego, and one or two more, remained with him; the other men were kept below, that they might be out of danger.

"Holy Francis! but this has been a dreadful night, señor! How many hours until daylight?" said Diego.

"Two hours at least, I should think," replied Francisco; "but the affair will be decided before that."

"The saints protect us! See, señor, are they not coming?"

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Francisco looked through the gloom, in the direction of the out-buildings, and perceived a group of men advancing. A few moments and he could clearly make them out.

"Yes, truly, Diego; and they have made ladders, which they are carrying. They intend to storm the windows. Call them up; and now we must fight hard indeed."

The Spaniards hastened up and filled the room above, which had three windows in the front, looking towards the river, and which had been sheltered by the veranda.

"Shall we fire now, señor?"

"No—no; do not fire till your muzzles are at their hearts. They cannot mount more than two at a time at each window. Recollect, my lads, that you must now fight hard, for your lives will not be spared; they will show no quarter and no mercy."

The ends of the rude ladders now made their appearance above the sill of each window. They had been hastily, yet firmly, constructed; and were nearly as wide as the windows. A loud cheer was followed by a simultaneous mounting of the ladders.

Francisco was at the centre window, when Hawkhurst made his appearance, sabre in hand. He struck aside a musket aimed at him, and the ball whizzed harmless over the broad water of the river. Another step, and he would have been in, when Francisco fired his pistol; the ball entered the left shoulder of Hawkhurst, and he dropped his hold. Before he could regain it, a Spaniard charged at him with a musket, and threw him back. He fell, bearing down with him one or two of his comrades, who had been following him up the ladder.

Francisco felt as if the attack at that window was of little consequence after the fall of Hawkhurst, whose voice he had recognised; and he hastened to the one on the left, as he had heard Cain encouraging his men in that direction. He was not wrong in his conjecture; Cain was at the window, attempting to force an entrance, but was opposed by Diego

## THE LANDING

and other resolute men. But the belt of the pirate captain was full of pistols, and he had already fired three with effect. Diego and the two best men were wounded, and the others who opposed him were alarmed at his giant proportions. Francisco rushed to attack him ; but what was the force of so young a man against the herculean power of Cain ? Still Francisco's left hand was at the throat of the pirate, and the pistol was pointed in his right, when a flash of another pistol, fired by one who followed Cain, threw its momentary vivid light upon the features of Francisco, as he cried out, " Blood for blood ! " It was enough ; the pirate captain uttered a yell of terror at the supposed supernatural appearance ; and he fell from the ladder in a fit amongst the still burning embers of the veranda.

The fall of their two chiefs, and the determined resistance of the Spaniards, checked the impetuosity of the assailants. They hesitated ; and they at last retreated, bearing away with them their wounded. The Spaniards cheered, and, led by Francisco, followed them down the ladders, and in their turn became the assailants. Still the pirates' retreat was orderly : they fired, and retired rank behind rank successively. They kept the Spaniards at bay, until they had arrived at the boats, when a charge was made, and a severe conflict ensued. But the pirates had lost too many men, and, without their commander, felt dispirited. Hawkhurst was still on his legs, and giving his orders as coolly as ever. He espied Francisco, and rushing at him, while the two parties were opposed muzzle to muzzle, seized him by his collar and dragged him in amongst the pirates. " Secure him, at all events ! " cried Hawkhurst, as they slowly retreated and gained the out-houses. Francisco was overpowered and hauled into one of the boats, all of which in a few minutes afterwards were pulling with all their might to escape from the muskets of the Spaniards, who followed the pirates by the banks of the river, annoying them in their retreat.

## THE PIRATE

### CHAPTER XIV

#### THE MEETING

THE pirates returned to their vessel discomfited. Those on board, who were prepared to hoist in ingots of precious metal, had to receive nought but wounded men, and many of their comrades had remained dead on the shore. Their captain was melancholy and downcast. Hawkhurst was badly wounded, and obliged to be carried below as soon as he came on board. The only capture which they had made was their former associate Francisco, who, by the last words spoken by Hawkhurst as he was supported to his cabin, was ordered to be put in irons. The boats were hoisted in without noise, and a general gloom prevailed. All sail was then made upon the schooner, and when day dawned she was seen by the Spaniards far away to the northward.

The report was soon spread through the schooner that Francisco had been the cause of their defeat; and although this was only a surmise, still, as they considered that had he not recognised the vessel the Spaniards would not have been prepared, they had good grounds for what had swelled into an assertion. He became, therefore, to many of them, an object of bitter enmity, and they looked forward with pleasure to his destruction, which his present confinement they considered but the precursor of.

"Hist! Massa Francisco," said a low voice near to where Francisco sat on the chest. Francisco turned round and beheld the Krouman, his old friend.

"Ah! Pompey, are you all still on board?" said Francisco.

"All! no," replied the man, shaking his head; "some die—some get away—only four Kroumen left. Massa Francisco, how you come back again? Everybody tink you dead. I say no, not dead—ab charm with him—ab book."

"If that was my charm, I have it still," replied Francisco,

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taking the Bible out of his vest ; for, strange to say, Francisco himself had a kind of superstition relative to that Bible, and had put it into his bosom previous to the attack made by the pirates.

“Dat very good, Massa Francisco ; den you quite safe. Here come Johnson—he very bad man. I go away.”

In the meantime Cain had retired to his cabin with feelings scarcely to be analysed. He was in a bewilderment. Notwithstanding the wound he had received by the hand of Francisco, he would never have sanctioned Hawkhurst putting him on shore on a spot which promised nothing but a lingering and miserable death. Irritated as he had been by the young man’s open defiance, he loved him—loved him much more than he was aware of himself ; and when he had recovered sufficiently from his wound, and had been informed where Francisco had been sent on shore, he quarrelled with Hawkhurst, and reproached him bitterly and sternly, in language which Hawkhurst never forgot or forgave. The vision of the starving lad haunted Cain, and rendered him miserable. His affection for him, now that he was, as he supposed, lost for ever, increased with tenfold force ; and since that period Cain had never been seen to smile. He became more gloomy, more ferocious than ever, and the men trembled when he appeared on deck.

The apparition of Francisco after so long an interval, and in such an unexpected quarter of the globe, acted as we have before described upon Cain. When he was taken to the boat he was still confused in his ideas, and it was not until they were nearly on board that he perceived that this young man was indeed at his side. He could have fallen on his neck and kissed him ; for Francisco had become to him a capture more prized than all the wealth of the Indies. But one pure, good feeling was unextinguished in the bosom of Cain ; stained with every crime—with his hands so deeply imbrued in blood—at enmity with all the rest of the world, that one feeling burnt bright and clear, and was not to be



## THE PIRATE

quenched. It might have proved a beacon-light to steer him back to repentance and to good works.

But there were other feelings which also crowded upon the mind of the pirate captain. He knew Francisco's firmness and decision. By some inscrutable means, which Cain considered as supernatural, Francisco had obtained the knowledge, and had accused him, of his mother's death. Would not the affection which he felt for the young man be met with hatred and defiance? He was but too sure that it would. And then his gloomy, cruel disposition would re-assume its influence, and he thought of revenging the attack upon his life. His astonishment at the reappearance of Francisco was equally great, and he trembled at the sight of him, as if he were his accusing and condemning spirit. Thus did he wander from one fearful fancy to another, until he at last summoned up resolution to send for him.

A morose, dark man, whom Francisco had not seen when he was before in the schooner, obeyed the commands of the captain. The irons were unlocked, and Francisco was brought down into the cabin. The captain rose and shut the door.

"I little thought to see you here, Francisco," said Cain.

"Probably not," replied Francisco boldly, "but you have me again in your power, and may now wreak your vengeance."

"I feel none, Francisco; nor would I have suffered you to have been put on shore as you were, had I known of it. Even now that our expedition has failed through your means, I feel no anger towards you, although I shall have some difficulty in preserving you from the enmity of others. Indeed, Francisco, I am glad to find that you are alive, and I have bitterly mourned your loss;" and Cain extended his hand.

But Francisco folded his arms, and was silent.

"Are you then so unforgiving?" said the captain. "You know that I tell the truth."

"I believe that you state the truth, Captain Cain, for you

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are too bold to lie; and, as far as I am concerned, you have all the forgiveness you may wish: but I cannot take that hand; nor are our accounts yet settled."

"What would you more? Cannot we be friends again? I do not ask you to remain on board. You are free to go where you please. Come, Francisco, take my hand, and let us forget what is past."

"The hand that is imbrued with my mother's blood, perhaps!" exclaimed Francisco. "Never!"

"Not so, by G—d!" exclaimed Cain. "No, no; not quite so bad as that. In my mood I struck your mother; I grant it. I did not intend to injure her, but I did, and she died. I will not lie—that is the fact. And it is also the fact that I wept over her, Francisco; for I loved her as I do you." ("It was a hasty, bitter blow, that," continued Cain, soliloquising, with his hand to his forehead, and unconscious of Francisco's presence at the moment. "It made me what I am, for it made me reckless.") "Francisco," said Cain, raising his head, "I was bad, but I was no pirate when your mother lived. There is a curse upon me; that which I love most I treat the worst. Of all the world, I loved your mother most; yet did she from me receive much injury, and at last I caused her death. Next to your mother, whose memory I at once revere and love, and tremble when I think of (and each night does she appear to me), I have loved you, Francisco, for you, like her, have an angel's feelings; yet have I treated you as ill. You thwarted me, and you were right. Had you been wrong, I had not cared; but you were right, and it maddened me. Your appeals by day—your mother's in my dreams——"

Francisco's heart was softened; if not repentance, there was at least contrition. "Indeed I pity you," replied Francisco.

"You must do more, Francisco; you must be friends with me," said Cain, again extending his hand.

"I cannot take that hand, it is too deeply dyed in blood," replied Francisco.

## THE PIRATE

"Well, well, so would have said your mother. But hear me, Francisco," said Cain, lowering his voice to a whisper, lest he should be overheard; "I am tired of this life—perhaps sorry for what I have done—I wish to leave it—have wealth in plenty concealed where others know not. Tell me, Francisco, shall we both quit this vessel, and live together happily and without doing wrong? You shall share all, Francisco. Say, now, does that please you?"

"Yes; it pleases me to hear that you will abandon your lawless life, Captain Cain: but share your wealth I cannot, for how has it been gained?"

"It cannot be returned, Francisco; I will do good with it. I will indeed, Francisco. I—will—repent;" and again the hand was extended.

Francisco hesitated.

"I do, so help me God! I *do* repent, Francisco!" exclaimed the pirate captain.

"And I, as a Christian, do forgive you all," replied Francisco, taking the still extended hand. "May God forgive you too!"

"Amen!" replied the pirate solemnly, covering his face up in his hands.

In this position he remained some minutes, Francisco watching him in silence. At last the face was uncovered, and, to the surprise of Francisco, a tear was on the cheek of Cain and his eyes suffused with moisture. Francisco no longer waited for the hand to be extended; he walked up to the captain, and taking him by the hand, pressed it warmly.

"God bless you, boy! God bless you!" said Cain; "but leave me now."

Francisco returned on deck with a light and grateful heart. His countenance at once told those who were near him that he was not condemned, and many who dared not before take notice of, now saluted him. The man who had taken him out of irons looked round; he was a creature of Hawkhurst,

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and he knew not how to act. Francisco observed him, and, with a wave of the hand, ordered him below. That Francisco was again in authority was instantly perceived, and the first proof of it was, that the new second mate reported to him that there was a sail on the weather bow.

Francisco took the glass to examine her. It was a large schooner under all sail. Not wishing that any one should enter the cabin but himself, he went down to the cabin-door and knocked before he entered, and reported the vessel.

"Thank you, Francisco; you must take Hawkhurst's duty for the present—it shall not be for long; and fear not that I shall make another capture. I swear to you I will not, Francisco. But this schooner—I know very well what she is; she has been looking after us some time; and a week ago, Francisco, I was anxious to meet her, that I might shed more blood. Now I will do all I can to avoid her, and escape. I can do no more, Francisco. I must not be taken."

"There I cannot blame you. To avoid her will be easy, I should think; the *Avenger* outsails everything."

"Except, I believe, the *Enterprise*, which is a sister vessel. By heaven! it's a fair match," continued Cain, his feelings of combativeness returning for a moment; "and it will look like a craven to refuse the fight: but fear not, Francisco—I have promised you, and I shall keep my word."

Cain went on deck, and surveyed the vessel through the glass.

"Yes, it must be her," said he aloud, so as to be heard by the pirates; "she has been sent out by the admiral on purpose, full of his best men. What a pity we are so short-handed!"

"There's enough of us, sir," observed the boatswain.

"Yes," replied Cain, "if there was anything but hard blows to be got; but that is all, and I cannot spare more men. Ready about!" continued he, walking aft.

The *Enterprise*, for she was the vessel in pursuit, was then about five miles distant, steering for the *Avenger*, who was

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on a wind. As soon as the *Avenger* tacked, the *Enterprise* took in her topmast studding-sail, and hauled her wind. This brought the *Enterprise* well on the weather-quarter of the *Avenger*, who now made all sail. The pirates, who had had quite enough of fighting, and were not stimulated by the presence of Hawkhurst, or the wishes of their captain, now showed as much anxiety to avoid as they usually did to seek a combat.

At the first trial of sailing between the two schooners there was no perceptible difference; for half-an-hour they both continued on a wind, and when Edward Templemore examined his sextant a second time, he could not perceive that he had gained upon the *Avenger* one cable's length.

"We will keep away half a point," said Edward to his second in command. "We can afford that, and still hold the weather-gage."

The *Enterprise* was kept away, and increased her speed: they neared the *Avenger* more than a quarter of a mile.

"They are nearing us," observed Francisco; "we must keep away a point."

Away went the *Avenger*, and would have recovered her distance, but the *Enterprise* was again steered more off the wind.

Thus did they continue altering their course until the studding-sails below and aloft were set by both, and the position of the schooners was changed; the *Enterprise* now being on the starboard instead of the larboard quarter of the *Avenger*. The relative distance between the two schooners was, however, nearly the same, that is, about three miles and a half from each other; and there was every prospect of a long and weary chase on the part of the *Enterprise*, who again kept away a point to near the *Avenger*. Both vessels were now running to the eastward.

It was about an hour before dark that another sail hove in sight right ahead of the *Avenger*, and was clearly made out to be a frigate. The pirates were alarmed at this

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unfortunate circumstance, as there was little doubt but that she would prove a British cruiser; and, if not, they had equally reason to expect that she would assist in their capture. She had evidently perceived the two schooners, and had made all sail, tacking every quarter of an hour so as to keep her relative position. The *Enterprise*, who had also made out the frigate, to attract her attention, although not within range of the *Avenger*, commenced firing with her long gun.

"This is rather awkward," observed Cain.

"It will be dark in less than an hour," observed Francisco; "and that is our only chance."

Cain reflected a minute.

"Get the long gun ready, my lads! We will return her fire, Francisco, and hoist American colours; that will puzzle the frigate, at all events, and the night may do the rest."

The long gun of the *Avenger* was ready.

"I would not fire the long gun," observed Francisco; "it will show our force, and will give no reason for our attempt to escape. Now, if we were to fire our broadside guns, the difference of report between them and the one of large calibre fired by the other schooner would induce them to think that we are an American vessel."

"Very true," replied Cain; "and, as America is at peace with all the world, that our antagonist is a pirate. Hold fast the long gun, there, and unship the starboard ports. See that the ensign blows out clear."

The *Avenger* commenced firing an occasional gun from her broadside, the reports of which were hardly to be heard by those on board of the frigate; while the long gun of the *Enterprise* reverberated along the water, and its loud resonance was swept by the wind to the frigate to leeward.

Such was the state of affairs when the sun sank down in the wave, and darkness obscured the vessels from each other sight, except with the assistance of the night-telescopes.

"What do you propose to do, Captain Cain?" said Francisco.



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"I have made up my mind to do a bold thing. I will run down to the frigate, as if for shelter; tell him that the other vessel is a pirate, and claim his protection. Leave me to escape afterwards; the moon will not rise till nearly one o'clock."

"That will be a bold ruse indeed; but suppose you are once under her broadside, and she suspects you?"

"Then I will show her my heels. I should care nothing for her and her broadside if the schooner was not here."

In an hour after dark the *Avenger* was close to the frigate, having steered directly for her. She shortened sail gradually, as if she had few hands on board; and, keeping his men out of sight, Cain ran under the stern of the frigate.

"Schooner ahoy! What schooner is that?"

"*Eliza* of Baltimore, from Carthagen," replied Cain, rounding to under the lee of the man-of-war, and then continuing: "That vessel in chase is a pirate. Shall I send a boat on board?"

"No; keep company with us."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Cain.

"Hands about ship!" now resounded with the boatswain's whistle on board of the frigate, and in a minute they were on the other tack. The *Avenger* also tacked and kept close under the frigate's counter.

In the meantime Edward Templemore and those on board of the *Enterprise*, who, by the course steered, had gradually neared them, perceiving the motions of the two other vessels, were quite puzzled. At one time they thought they had made a mistake, and that it was not the pirate vessel; at another they surmised that the crew had mutinied and surrendered to the frigate. Edward hauled his wind, and steered directly for them, to ascertain what the real facts were. The captain of the frigate, who had never lost sight of either vessel, was equally astonished at the boldness of the supposed pirate.

"Surely the rascal does not intend to board us?" said he to the first lieutenant.

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"There is no saying, sir; you know what a character he has; and some say there are three hundred men on board, which is equal to our ship's company. Or perhaps, sir, he will pass to windward of us, and give us a broadside, and be off in the wind's eye again."

"At all events we will have a broadside ready for him," replied the captain. "Clear away the starboard guns, and take out the tompions. Pipe starboard watch to quarters."

The *Enterprise* closed with the frigate to windward, intending to run round her stern and bring to on the same tack.

"He does not shorten sail yet, sir," said the first lieutenant, as the schooner appeared skimming along about a cable's length on their weather bow.

"And she is full of men, sir," said the master, looking at her through the night-glass.

"Fire a gun at her!" said the captain.

Bang! The smoke cleared away, and the schooner's foretopsail, which she was in the act of clewing up, lay over her side. The shot had struck the foremast of the *Enterprise*, and cut it in two below the catharpings. The *Enterprise* was, for the time, completely disabled.

"Schooner ahoy! What schooner is that?"

"His Majesty's schooner *Enterprise*."

"Send a boat on board immediately."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Turn the hands up! Shorten sail!"

The top-gallant and courses of the frigate were taken in, and the mainsail hove to the mast.

"Signalman, whereabouts is that other schooner now?"

"The schooner, sir? On the quarter," replied the signalman, who, with everybody else on board, was so anxious about the *Enterprise* that they had neglected to watch the motions of the supposed American. The man had replied at random, and he now jumped upon the signal-chests abaft to look for her. But she was not to be seen. Cain, who had watched

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all that passed between the other two vessels, and had been prepared to slip off at a moment's warning, as soon as the gun was fired at the other schooner, had wore round and made all sail on a wind. The night-glass discovered her half a mile astern; and the ruse was immediately perceived. The frigate filled and made sail, leaving Edward to return on board—for there was no time to stop for the boat—tacked, and gave chase. But the *Avenger* was soon in the wind's eye of her; and at daylight was no longer to be seen.

In the meantime, Edward Templemore had followed the frigate as soon as he could set sail on his vessel, indignant at his treatment, and vowing that he would demand a court-martial. About noon the frigate rejoined him, when matters were fully explained. Annoyed as they all felt at not having captured the pirate, it was unanimously agreed, that by his audacity and coolness he deserved to escape. It was found that the mast of the *Enterprise* could be fished and scarfed, so as to enable her to continue her cruise. The carpenters of the frigate were sent on board; and in two days the injury was repaired, and Edward Templemore once more went in pursuit of the *Avenger*.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE MISTAKE

THE *Avenger* stood under a press of sail to the northward. She had left her pursuers far behind; and there was not a speck on the horizon, when, on the second morning, Francisco, who had resumed his berth in the captain's cabin, went up on deck. Notwithstanding the request of Cain, Francisco refused to take any part in the command of the schooner, considering himself as a passenger, or prisoner on parole. He had not been on deck but a few minutes, when he observed the two Spanish fishermen, belonging to the establishment of Don Cumanos, conversing together forward. Their

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capture had quite escaped his memory, and he went forward to speak to them. Their surprise at seeing him was great, until Francisco informed them of what had passed. They then recounted what had occurred to them, and showed their thumbs, which had been put into screws to torture from them the truth. Francisco shuddered, but consoled them by promising that they should soon be at liberty, and return to their former master.

As Francisco returned from forward, he found Hawkhurst on the deck. Their eyes met and flashed in enmity. Hawkhurst was pale from loss of blood, and evidently suffering; but he had been informed of the apparent reconciliation between Francisco and the captain, and he could no longer remain in his bed. He knew, also, how the captain had avoided the combat with the *Enterprise*; and something told him that there was a revolution of feeling in more than one point. Suffering as he was, he resolved to be a spectator of what passed, and to watch narrowly. For both Francisco and Cain he had imbibed a deadly hatred, and was watching for an opportunity to wreak his revenge. At present they were too powerful; but he felt that the time was coming when he might be triumphant.

Francisco passed Hawkhurst without speaking.

"You are at liberty again, I see," observed Hawkhurst with a sneer.

"I am not, at all events, indebted to you for it," replied Francisco haughtily; "nor for my life either."

"No, indeed; but I believe that I am indebted to you for this bullet in my shoulder," replied the mate.

"You are," replied Francisco coolly.

"And depend upon it, the debt shall be repaid with usury."

"I have no doubt of it, if ever it is in your power; but I fear you not."

As Francisco made this reply, the captain came up the ladder. Hawkhurst turned away and walked forward.

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"There is mischief in that man, Francisco," said the captain in an undertone; "I hardly know whom to trust; but he must be watched. He is tampering with the men, and has been for some time; not that it is of much consequence, if he does but remain quiet for a little while. The command of this vessel he is welcome to very soon; but if he attempts too early——"

"I have those I can trust to," replied Francisco. "Let us go below."

Francisco sent for Pompey the Krouman, and gave him his directions in the presence of the captain. That night, to the surprise of all, Hawkhurst kept his watch; and, notwithstanding the fatigue, appeared every day to be rapidly recovering from his wound.

Nothing occurred for several days, during which the *Avenger* still continued her course. What the captain's intentions were did not transpire; they were known only to Francisco.

"We are very short of water, sir," reported Hawkhurst one morning; "shall we have enough to last us to where we are going?"

"How many days of full allowance have we on board?"

"Not above twelve at the most."

"Then we must go on half allowance," replied Cain.

"The ship's company wish to know where we are going, sir."

"Have they deputed you to ask the question?"

"Not exactly, sir; but I wish to know myself," replied Hawkhurst, with an insolent air.

"Turn the hands up," replied Cain; "as one of the ship's company under my orders, you will, with the others, receive the information you require."

The crew of the pirate collected aft.

"My lads," said Cain, "I understand, from the first mate, that you are anxious to know where you are going? In reply, I acquaint you, that having so many wounded men on

## THE MISTAKE

board, and so much plunder in the hold, I intend to repair to our rendezvous when we were formerly in this part of the world—the *Caicôs*. Is there any other question you may wish to ask of me?”

“Yes,” replied Hawkhurst; “we wish to know what your intentions are relative to that young man, Francisco. We have lost immense wealth; we have now thirty men wounded in the hammocks, and nine we left dead on the shore; and I have a bullet through my body; all of which has been occasioned by him. We demand justice!”

Here Hawkhurst was supported by several of the pirates; and there were many voices which repeated the cry of “Justice!”

“My men! you demand justice, and you shall have it,” replied Cain. “This lad you all know well; I have brought him up as a child. He has always disliked our mode of life, and has often requested to leave it, but has been refused. He challenged me by our own laws, ‘Blood for blood!’ He wounded me; but he was right in his challenge, and therefore I bear no malice. Had I been aware that he was to have been sent on shore to die with hunger, I would not have permitted it. What crime had he committed? None; or, if any, it was against me. He was then sentenced to death for no crime, and you yourselves exclaimed against it. Is it not true?”

“Yes—yes,” replied the majority of the pirates.

“By a miracle he escapes, and is put in charge of another man’s property. He is made a prisoner, and now you demand justice. You shall have it. Allowing that his life is forfeit for this offence,—you have already sentenced him, and left him to death unjustly, and therefore are bound in justice to give his life in this instance. I ask it, my men, not only as his right, but as a favour to your captain.”

“Agreed; it’s all fair!” exclaimed the majority of the pirate’s crew.

“My men, I thank you,” replied Cain; “and in return, as



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soon as we arrive at the Caicos, my share of the plunder on board shall be divided among you."

This last observation completely turned the tables in favour of the captain; and those who had joined Hawkhurst now sided with the captain. Hawkhurst looked like a demon.

"Let those who choose to be bought off take your money," replied he; "but *I will not*. Blood for blood I will have; and so I give you warning. That lad's life is mine, and have it I will! Prevent me, if you can!" continued the mate, holding up his clenched hand, and shaking it almost in the pirate captain's face.

The blood mantled even to the forehead of Cain. One moment he raised himself to his utmost height, then seizing a handspike which lay near, he felled Hawkhurst to the deck.

"Take that for your mutiny!" exclaimed Cain, putting his foot on Hawkhurst's neck. "My lads, I appeal to you. Is this man worthy to be in command as mate? Is he to live?"

"No! no!" cried the pirates. "Death!"

Francisco stepped forward. "My men, you have granted your captain one favour; grant me another, which is the life of this man. Recollect how often he has led you to conquest, and how brave and faithful he has been until now! Recollect that he is suffering under his wound, which has made him irritable. Command you he cannot any longer, as he will never have the confidence of your captain; but let him live, and quit the vessel."

"Be it so, if you agree," replied Cain, looking at the men; "I do not seek his life."

The pirates consented. Hawkhurst rose slowly from the deck, and was assisted below to his cabin. The second mate was then appointed as the first, and the choice of the man to fill up the vacancy was left to the pirate crew.

For three days after this scene all was quiet and orderly on board of the pirate. Cain, now that he had more fully



“Take that for your mutiny!’ exclaimed Cain, putting his foot on Hawkhurst’s neck.”



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made up his mind how to act, imparted to Francisco his plans; and his giving up to the men his share of the booty still on board was, to Francisco, an earnest of his good intentions. A cordiality, even, a kind of feeling which never existed before, was created between them; but of Francisco's mother, and the former events of his own life, the pirate never spoke. Francisco more than once put questions on the subject; the answer was, "You shall know some of these days, Francisco, but not yet; you would hate me too much!"

The *Avenger* was now clear of the English isles, and with light winds running down the shores of Porto Rico. In the evening of the day on which they had made the land, the schooner was becalmed about three miles from the shore, and the new first mate proposed that he should land in the boat and obtain a further supply of water from a fall which they had discovered with the glasses. As this was necessary, Cain gave his consent, and the boat quitted the vessel full of breakers.

Now it happened that the *Avenger* lay becalmed abreast of the country seat of Don d'Alfarez, the governor of the island. Clara had seen the schooner; and, as usual, had thrown out the white curtain as a signal of recognition; for there was no perceptible difference, even to a sailor, at that distance, between the *Avenger* and the *Enterprise*. She had hastened down to the beach, and hurried into the cave, awaiting the arrival of Edward Templemore. The pirate boat landed at the very spot of rendezvous, and the mate leaped out of the boat. Clara flew to receive her Edward, and was instantly seized by the mate, before she discovered her mistake.

"Holy Virgin! who and what are you?" cried she, struggling to disengage herself.

"One who is very fond of a pretty girl!" replied the pirate, still detaining her.

"Unhand me, wretch!" cried Clara. "Are you aware whom you are addressing?"

"Not I! nor do I care," replied the pirate.

## THE PIRATE

"You will perhaps, sir, when you learn that I am the daughter of the governor!" exclaimed Clara, pushing him away.

"Yes, by heavens! you are right, pretty lady, I do care; for a governor's daughter will fetch a good ransom, at all events. So come, my lads, a little help here; for she is as strong as a young mule. Never mind the water, throw the breakers into the boat again; we have a prize worth taking!"

Clara screamed; but she was gagged with a handkerchief and lifted into the boat, which immediately rowed back to the schooner.

When the mate came on board and reported his capture, the pirates were delighted at the prospect of addition to their prize-money. Cain could not, of course, raise any objections; it would have been so different from his general practice, that it would have strengthened suspicions already set afloat by Hawkhurst, which Cain was most anxious just then to remove. He ordered the girl to be taken down into the cabin, hoisted in the boat, and the breeze springing up again, made sail.

In the meantime Francisco was consoling the unfortunate Clara, and assuring her that she need be under no alarm, promising her protection from himself and the captain.

The poor girl wept bitterly, and it was not until Cain came down into the cabin and corroborated the assurances of Francisco that she could assume any degree of composure; but to find friends when she had expected every insult and degradation—for Francisco had acknowledged that the vessel was a pirate—was some consolation. The kindness and attention of Francisco restored her to comparative tranquillity.

The next day she confided to him the reason of her coming to the beach, and her mistake with regard to the two vessels, and Francisco and Cain promised her that they would themselves pay her ransom, and not wait until she heard from her father. To divert her thoughts Francisco talked much about

## THE MISTAKE

Edward Templemore, and on that subject Clara could always talk. Every circumstance attending the amour was soon known to Francisco.

But the *Avenger* did not gain her rendezvous as soon as she expected. When to the northward of Porto Rico an English frigate bore down upon her, and the *Avenger* was obliged to run for it. Before the wind is always a schooner's worst point of sailing, and the chase was continued for three days before a fresh wind from the southward, until they had passed the Bahama Isles.

The pirates suffered much from want of water, as it was necessary still further to reduce their allowance. The frigate was still in sight, although the *Avenger* had dropped her astern when the wind became light, and at last it subsided into a calm, which lasted two days more. The boats of the frigate were hoisted out on the eve of the second day to attack the schooner, then distant five miles, when a breeze sprang up from the northward, and the schooner being then to windward, left the enemy hull down.

It was not until the next day that Cain ventured to run again to the southward to procure at one of the keys the water so much required. At last it was obtained, but with difficulty and much loss of time, from the scantiness of the supply, and they again made sail for the Caicos. But they were so much impeded by contrary winds and contrary currents that it was not until three weeks after they had been chased from Porto Rico that they made out the low land of their former rendezvous.

We must now return to Edward Templemore in the *Enterprise*, whom we left off the coast of South America in search of the *Avenger*, which had so strangely slipped through their fingers. Edward had examined the whole coast, ran through the passage and round Trinidad, and then started off to the Leeward Isles in his pursuit. He had spoken every vessel he met with without gaining any information, and had at last arrived off Porto Rico.



## THE PIRATE

This was no time to think of Clara; but, as it was not out of his way, he had run down the island, and as it was just before dark when he arrived off that part of the coast where the governor resided, he had hove-to for a little while, and had examined the windows: but the signal of recognition was not made, and after waiting till dark he again made sail, mad with disappointment, and fearing that all had been discovered by the governor; whereas the fact was, that he had only arrived two days after the forcible abduction of Clara. Once more he directed his attention to the discovery of the pirate, and after a fortnight's examination of the inlets and bays of the Island of St. Domingo without success, his provisions and water being nearly expended, he returned, in no very happy mood, to Port Royal.

In the meantime the disappearance of Clara had created the greatest confusion in Porto Rico, and upon the examination of her attendant, who was confronted by the friar and the duenna, the amour of her mistress was confessed. The appearance of the *Avenger* off the coast on that evening confirmed their ideas that the Donna Clara had been carried off by the English lieutenant, and Don Alfarez immediately despatched a vessel to Jamaica, complaining of the outrage, and demanding the restoration of his daughter.

This vessel arrived at Port Royal a few days before the *Enterprise*, and the admiral was very much astonished. He returned a very polite answer to Don Alfarez, promising an investigation immediately upon the arrival of the schooner, and to send a vessel with the result of the said investigation.

"This is a pretty business," said the admiral to his secretary. "Young madcap! I sent him to look after a pirate, and he goes after the governor's daughter! By the lord Harry, Mr. Templemore, but you and I shall have an account to settle."

"I can hardly believe it, sir," replied the secretary; "and yet it does look suspicious. But on so short an acquaintance——"

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"Who knows that, Mr. Hadley? Send for his logs, and let us examine them; he may have been keeping up the acquaintance."

The logs of the *Enterprise* were examined, and there were the fatal words—Porto Rico, Porto Rico, bearing in every division of the compass, and in every separate cruise, nay, even when the schooner was charged with despatches.

"Plain enough," said the admiral. "Confounded young scamp, to embroil me in this way! Not that his marrying the girl is any business of mine; but I will punish him for disobedience of orders, at all events. Try him by a court-martial, by heavens!"

The secretary made no reply: he knew very well that the admiral would do no such thing.

"The *Enterprise* anchored at daylight, sir," reported the secretary as the admiral sat down to breakfast.

"And where's Mr. Templemore?"

"He is outside in the veranda. They have told him below of what he has been accused, and he swears it is false. I believe him, sir, for he appears half mad at the intelligence."

"Stop a moment. Have you looked over his log?"

"Yes, sir. It appears that he was off Porto Rico on the 19th; but the Spanish governor's letter says that he was there on the 17th, and again made his appearance on the 19th. I mentioned it to him, and he declares upon his honour that he was only there on the 19th, as stated in his log."

"Well, let him come in and speak for himself."

Edward came in, in a state of great agitation.

"Well, Mr. Templemore, you have been playing pretty tricks! What is all this, sir? Where is the girl, sir—the governor's daughter?"

"Where she is, sir, I cannot pretend to say; but I feel convinced that she has been carried off by the pirates."

"Pirates! Poor girl, I pity her!—and I pity you too, Edward. Come, sit down here, and tell me all that has happened."

## THE PIRATE

Edward knew the admiral's character so well, that he immediately disclosed all that had passed between him and Clara. He then stated how the *Avenger* had escaped him by deceiving the frigate, and the agreement made with Clara to meet for the future on the beach, with his conviction that the pirate schooner, so exactly similar in appearance to the *Enterprise*, must have preceded him at Porto Rico, and have carried off the object of his attachment.

Although Edward might have been severely taken to task, yet the admiral pitied him, and therefore said nothing about his visits to Porto Rico. When breakfast was over he ordered the signal to be made for a sloop of war to prepare to weigh, and the *Enterprise* to be revictualled by the boats of the squadron.

"Now, Edward, you and the *Comus* shall sail in company after this rascally pirate, and I trust you will give me a good account of her, and also of the governor's daughter. Cheer up, my boy! depend upon it they will try for ransom before they do her any injury."

That evening the *Enterprise* and *Comus* sailed on their expedition, and having run by Porto Rico and delivered a letter to the governor, they steered to the northward, and early the next morning made the land of the Caicos, just as the *Avenger* had skirted the reefs and bore up for the narrow entrance.

"There she is!" exclaimed Edward; "there she is, by heavens!" making the signal for the enemy, which was immediately answered by the *Comus*.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CAICOS

THE small patch of islands called the Caicos, or Cayques, is situated about two degrees to the northward of St. Domingo, and is nearly the southernmost of a chain which extends up to the Bahamas. Most of the islands of this chain are un-

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inhabited, but were formerly the resort of piratical vessels,—the reefs and shoals with which they are all surrounded afforded them protection from their larger pursuers, and the passages through this dangerous navigation being known only to the pirates who frequented them, proved an additional security. The largest of the Caicos islands forms a curve, like an opened horse-shoe, to the southward, with safe and protected anchorage when once in the bay on the southern side; but, previous to arriving at the anchorage, there are coral reefs, extending upwards of forty miles, through which it is necessary to conduct a vessel. This passage is extremely intricate, but was well known to Hawkhurst, who had hitherto been pilot. Cain was not so well acquainted with it, and it required the greatest care in taking in the vessel, as, on the present occasion, Hawkhurst could not be called upon for this service. The islands themselves—for there were several of them—were composed of coral rock; a few cocoa-trees raised their lofty heads where there was sufficient earth for vegetation, and stunted brushwood rose up between the interstices of the rocks. But the chief peculiarity of the islands, and which rendered them suitable to those who frequented them, was the numerous caves with which the rocks were perforated, some above high-water mark, but the majority with the sea-water flowing in and out of them, in some cases merely rushing in, and at high water filling deep pools, which were detached from each other when the tide receded, in others with a sufficient depth of water at all times to allow you to pull in with a large boat. It is hardly necessary to observe how convenient the higher and dry caves were as receptacles for articles which were intended to be concealed until an opportunity occurred for disposing of them.

In our last chapter we stated that, just as the *Avenger* had entered the passage through the reefs, the *Comus* and *Enterprise* hove in sight and discovered her; but it will be necessary to explain the positions of the vessels. The *Avenger* had

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entered the southern channel, with the wind from the southward, and had carefully sounded her way for about four miles, under little or no sail.

The *Enterprise* and *Comus* had been examining Turk's Island, to the eastward of the Caicos, and had passed to the northward of it on the larboard tack, standing in for the northern point of the reef, which joined on to the great Caicos Island. They were, therefore, in a situation to intercept the *Avenger* before she arrived at her anchorage, had it not been for the reefs which barred their passage. The only plan which the English vessels could act upon was to beat to the southward, so as to arrive at the entrance of the passage, when the *Enterprise* would, of course, find sufficient water to follow the *Avenger*; for, as the passage was too narrow to beat through, and the wind was from the southward, the *Avenger* could not possibly escape. She was caught in a trap; and all that she had to trust to was the defence which she might be able to make in her stronghold against the force which could be employed in the attack. The breeze was fresh from the southward, and appeared inclined to increase, when the *Comus* and *Enterprise* made all sail, and worked, in short tacks, outside the reef.

On board the *Avenger* the enemy and their motions were clearly distinguished, and Cain perceived that he was in an awkward dilemma. That they would be attacked he had no doubt; and although, at any other time, he would almost have rejoiced in such an opportunity of discomfiting his assailants, yet now he thought very differently, and would have sacrificed almost everything to have been able to avoid the rencontre, and be permitted quietly to withdraw himself from his associates, without the spilling of more blood. Francisco was equally annoyed at this unfortunate collision; but no words were exchanged between him and the pirate captain during the time that they were on deck.

It was about nine o'clock, when having safely passed nearly half through the channel, that Cain ordered the

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ledge-anchor to be dropped, and sent down the people to their breakfast. Francisco went down into the cabin, and was explaining their situation to Clara, when Cain entered. He threw himself on the locker, and appeared lost in deep and sombre meditation.

"What do you intend to do?" said Francisco.

"I do not know; I will not decide myself, Francisco," replied Cain. "If I were to act upon my own judgment, probably I should allow the schooner to remain where she is. They can only attack in the boats, and, in such a case, I do not fear; whereas, if we run right through, we allow the other schooner to follow us, without defending the passage; and we may be attacked by her in the deep water inside, and overpowered by the number of men the two vessels will be able to bring against us. On the other hand, we certainly may defend the schooner from the shore as well as on board; but we are weak-handed. I shall, however, call up the ship's company and let them decide. God knows, if left to me I would not fight at all."

"Is there no way of escape?" resumed Francisco.

"Yes, we might abandon the schooner; and this night, when they would not expect it, run with the boats through the channel between the great island and the north Cayque: but that I dare not propose, and the men would not listen to it; indeed, I very much doubt if the enemy will allow us the time. I knew this morning, long before we saw those vessels, that my fate would be decided before the sun went down."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean this, Francisco," said Cain; "that your mother, who always has visited me in my dreams whenever anything (dreadful now to think of!) was about to take place, appeared to me last night; and there was sorrow and pity in her sweet face as she mournfully waved her hand, as if to summon me to follow her. Yes, thank God! she no longer looked upon me as for many years she has done."



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Francisco made no answer ; and Cain again seemed to be lost in meditation.

After a little while Cain rose, and taking a small packet from one of the drawers, put it into the hands of Francisco.

"Preserve that," said the pirate captain ; "should any accident happen to me it will tell you who was your mother ; and it also contains directions for finding treasure which I have buried. I leave everything to you, Francisco. It has been unfairly obtained ; but you are not the guilty party, and there are none to claim it. Do not answer me now. You may find friends, whom you will make after I am gone, of the same opinion as I am. I tell you again, be careful of that packet."

"I see little chance of it availing me," replied Francisco. "If I live, shall I not be considered as a pirate ?"

"No, no ; you can prove the contrary."

"I have my doubts. But God's will be done !"

"Yes, God's will be done !" said Cain mournfully. "I dared not have said that a month ago." And the pirate captain went on deck, followed by Francisco.

The crew of the *Avenger* were summoned aft, and called upon to decide as to the measures they considered to be most advisable. They preferred weighing the anchor and running into the bay, where they would be able to defend the schooner, in their opinion, much better than by remaining where they were.

The crew of the pirate schooner weighed the anchor, and continued their precarious course ; the breeze had freshened, and the water was in strong ripples, so that they could no longer see the danger beneath her bottom. In the meantime, the sloop of war and *Enterprise* continued to turn to windward outside the reef.

By noon the wind had considerably increased, and the breakers now turned and broke in wild foam over the coral reefs in every direction. The sail was still more reduced on board the *Avenger*, and her difficulties increased from the rapidity of her motion.

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A storm-jib was set, and the others hauled down; yet even under this small sail she flew before the wind.

Cain stood at the bowsprit, giving his directions to the helmsman. More than once they had grazed the rocks and were clear again. Spars were towed astern, and every means resorted to, to check her way. They had no guide but the breaking of the wild water on each side of them.

"Why should not Hawkhurst, who knows the passage so well, be made to pilot us?" said the boatswain to those who were near him on the forecastle.

"To be sure! let's have him up!" cried several of the crew; and some of them went down below.

In a minute they reappeared with Hawkhurst, whom they led forward. He did not make any resistance, and the crew demanded that he should pilot the vessel.

"And suppose I will not?" said Hawkhurst coolly.

"Then you lose your passage, that's all," replied the boatswain. "Is it not so, my lads?" continued he, appealing to the crew.

"Yes; either take us safe in, or—overboard," replied several.

"I do not mind that threat, my lads," replied Hawkhurst; "you have all known me as a good man and true, and it's not likely that I shall desert you now. Well, since your captain there cannot save you, I suppose I must; but," exclaimed he, looking about him, "how's this? We are out of the passage already. Yes—and whether we can get into it again I cannot tell."

"We are not out of the passage," said Cain; "you know we are not."

"Well then, if the captain knows better than I, he had better take you through," rejoined Hawkhurst.

But the crew thought differently, and insisted that Hawkhurst, who well knew the channel, should take charge. Cain retired aft, as Hawkhurst went out on the bowsprit.

"I will do my best, my lads," said Hawkhurst; "but

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recollect, if we strike in trying to get into the right channel, do not blame me. Starboard a little—starboard yet—steady, so—there's the true passage, my lads!" cried he, pointing to some smoother water between the breakers; "port a little—steady."

But Hawkhurst, who knew that he was to be put on shore as soon as convenient, had resolved to lose the schooner, even if his own life were forfeited, and he was now running her out of the passage on the rocks. A minute after he had conned her, she struck heavily again and again. The third time she struck, she came broadside to the wind and heeled over; a sharp coral rock found its way through her slight timbers and planking, and the water poured in rapidly.

During this there was a dead silence on the part of the marauders.

"My lads," said Hawkhurst, "I have done my best, and now you may throw me overboard if you please. It was not my fault, but his," continued he, pointing to the captain.

"It is of little consequence whose fault it was, Mr. Hawkhurst," replied Cain; "we will settle that point by-and-by; at present we have too much on our hands. Out boats, men! as fast as you can, and let every man provide himself with arms and ammunition. Be cool! the schooner is fixed hard enough, and will not go down; we shall save everything by-and-by."

The pirates obeyed the orders of the captain. The three boats were hoisted out and lowered down. In the first were placed all the wounded men and Clara d'Alfarez, who was assisted up by Francisco. As soon as the men had provided themselves with arms, Francisco, to protect Clara, offered to take charge of her, and the boat shoved off.

The men-of-war had seen the *Avenger* strike on the rocks, and the preparations of the crew to take to their boats. They immediately hove-to, hoisted out and manned their own boats, with the hopes of cutting them off before they could gain the island and prepare for a vigorous defence; for, although the

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vessels could not approach the reefs, there was sufficient water in many places for the boats to pass over them. Shortly after Francisco, in the first boat, had shoved off from the *Avenger*, the boats of the men-of-war were darting through the surf to intercept them. The pirates perceived this, and hastened their arrangements; a second boat soon left her, and into that Hawkhurst leaped as it was shoving off. Cain remained on board, going round the lower decks to ascertain if any of the wounded men were left; he then quitted the schooner in the last boat and followed the others, being about a quarter of a mile astern of the second, in which Hawkhurst had secured his place.

At the time that Cain quitted the schooner, it was difficult to say whether the men-of-war's boats would succeed in intercepting any of the pirates' boats. Both parties exerted themselves to their utmost; and when the first boat, with Francisco and Clara, landed, the headmost of the assailants was not much more than half a mile from them; but shallow water intervening there was a delay, which was favourable to the pirates. Hawkhurst landed in his boat as the launch of the *Comus* fired her eighteen-pound carronade. The last boat was yet two hundred yards from the beach, when another shot from the *Comus's* launch, which had been unable hitherto to find a passage through the reef, struck her on the counter, and she filled and went down.

"He is gone!" exclaimed Francisco, who had led Clara to a cave, and stood at the mouth of it to protect her; "they have sunk his boat—no, he is swimming to the shore, and will be here now, long before the English seamen can land."

This was true. Cain was breasting the water manfully, making for a small cove nearer to where the boat was sunk than the one in which Francisco had landed with Clara and the wounded men, and divided from the other by a ridge of rocks which separated the sandy beach, and extended some way into the water before they were submerged. Francisco

## THE PIRATE

could easily distinguish the pirate captain from the other men, who also were swimming for the beach ; for Cain was far ahead of them, and as he gained nearer to the shore he was shut from Francisco's sight by the ridge of rocks. Francisco, anxious for his safety, climbed up the rocks and was watching. Cain was within a few yards of the beach when there was a report of a musket ; the pirate captain was seen to raise his body convulsively half out of the water—he floundered—the clear blue wave was discoloured—he sank, and was seen no more.

Francisco darted forward from the rocks, and perceived Hawkhurst standing beneath them with the musket in his hand, which he was recharging.

"Villain !" exclaimed Francisco, "you shall account for this."

Hawkhurst had reprimed his musket and shut the pan.

"Not to you," replied Hawkhurst, levelling his piece, and taking aim at Francisco.

The ball struck Francisco on the breast ; he reeled back from his position, staggered across the sand, gained the cave, and fell at the feet of Clara.

"O God !" exclaimed the poor girl, "are *you* hurt ? who is there, then, to protect me ?"

"I hardly know," replied Francisco faintly ; and, at intervals, "I feel no wound. I feel stronger ;" and Francisco put his hand to his heart.

Clara opened his vest, and found that the packet given to Francisco by Cain, and which he had deposited in his breast, had been struck by the bullet, which had done him no injury further than the violent concussion of the blow—notwithstanding he was faint from the shock, and his head fell upon Clara's bosom.

But we must relate the proceedings of those who were mixed up in this exciting scene. Edward Templemore had watched from his vessel, with an eager and painful curiosity, the motions of the schooner—her running on the rocks, and

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the subsequent actions of the intrepid marauders. The long telescope enabled him to perceive distinctly all that passed, and his feelings were increased into a paroxysm of agony when his straining eyes beheld the white and fluttering habiliments of a female for a moment at the gunwale of the stranded vessel—her descent, as it appeared to him, nothing loth, into the boat—the arms held out to receive, and the extension of hers to meet those offered. Could it be Clara? Where was the reluctance, the unavailing attempts at resistance, which should have characterised her situation? Excited by feelings which he dared not analyse, he threw down his glass, and seizing his sword, sprang into his boat, which was ready manned alongside, desiring the others to follow him. For once, and the only time in his existence when approaching the enemy, did he feel his heart sink within him—a cold tremor ran through his whole frame, and as he called to mind the loose morals and desperate habits of the pirates, horrible thoughts entered his imagination. As he neared the shore, he stood up in the stern-sheets of the boat, pale, haggard, and with trembling lips; and the intensity of his feelings would have been intolerable but for a more violent thirst for revenge. He clenched his sword, while the quick throbs of his heart, seemed, at every pulsation, to repeat to him his thoughts of blood! blood! blood! He approached the small bay and perceived that there was a female at the mouth of the cave—nearer and nearer, and he was certain that it was his Clara—her name was on his lips when he heard the two shots fired one after another by Hawkhurst—he saw the retreat and fall of Francisco—when, madness to behold! he perceived Clara rush forward, and there lay the young man supported by her, and with his head upon her bosom. Could he believe what he saw? could she really be his betrothed! Yes, there she was, supporting the handsome figure of a young man, and that man a pirate—she had even put her hand into his vest, and was now watching over his reviving form. Edward could bear no more; he covered



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his eyes, and now, maddened with jealousy, in a voice of thunder, he called out—

“Give way, my lads ! for your lives, give way !”

The gig was within half-a-dozen strokes of the oar from the beach, and Clara, unconscious of wrong, had just taken the packet of papers from Francisco’s vest, when Hawkhurst made his appearance from behind the rocks which separated the two little sandy coves. Francisco had recovered his breath, and, perceiving the approach of Hawkhurst, he sprang upon his feet to recover his musket ; but, before he could succeed, Hawkhurst had closed in with him, and a short and dreadful struggle ensued. It would soon have terminated fatally to Francisco, for the superior strength of Hawkhurst had enabled him to bear down the body of his opponent with his knee, and he was fast strangling him by twisting his handkerchief round his throat, while Clara shrieked, and attempted in vain to tear the pirate from him. As the prostrate Francisco was fast blackening into a corse, and the maiden screamed for pity, and became frantic in her efforts for his rescue, the boat dashed high up on the sand ; and, with the bound of a maddened tiger, Edward sprang upon Hawkhurst, tearing him down on his back, and severing his wrist with his sword-blade until his hold of Francisco was relaxed, and he wrestled in his own defence.

“Seize him, my lad !” said Edward, pointing with his left hand to Hawkhurst ; as with his sword directed to the body of Francisco he bitterly continued, “*This victim is mine !*” But, whatever were his intentions, they were frustrated by Clara’s recognition, who shrieked out, “My Edward !” sprang into his arms, and was immediately in a state of insensibility.

The seamen who had secured Hawkhurst looked upon the scene with curious astonishment, while Edward waited with mingled feelings of impatience and doubt for Clara’s recovery, he wished to be assured by her that he was mistaken, and he turned again and again from her face to that

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of Francisco, who was fast recovering. During this painful suspense, Hawkhurst was bound and made to sit down.

"Edward! dear Edward!" said Clara, at last, in a faint voice, clinging more closely to him; "and am I then rescued by thee, dearest!"

Edward felt the appeal; but his jealousy had not yet subsided.

"Who is that, Clara?" said he sternly.

"It is Francisco. No pirate, Edward, but my preserver."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Hawkhurst, with a bitter sneer, for he perceived how matters stood.

Edward Templemore turned towards him with an inquiring look.

"Ha, ha!" continued Hawkhurst; "why, he is the captain's son! No pirate, eh? Well, what will women not swear to, to save those they dote upon!"

"If the captain's son," said Edward, "why were you contending?"

"Because just now I shot his scoundrel father."

"Edward!" said Clara solemnly, "this is no time for explanation, but, as I hope for mercy, what I have said is true; believe not that villain."

"Yes," said Francisco, who was now sitting up, "believe him when he says that he shot the captain, for that is true; but, sir, if you value your own peace of mind, believe nothing to the prejudice of that young lady."

"I hardly know what to believe," muttered Edward Templemore; "but, as the lady says, this is no time for explanation. With your permission, madam," said he to Clara, "my coxswain will see you in safety on board of the schooner, or the other vessel, if you prefer it; my duty will not allow me to accompany you."

Clara darted a reproachful yet fond look on Edward, as, with swimming eyes, she was led by the coxswain to the boat, which had been joined by the launch of the *Comus*, the crew of which were with their officers, wading to the beach. The

## THE PIRATE

men of the gig remained until they had given Hawkhurst and Francisco in charge of the other seamen, and then shoved off with Clara for the schooner. Edward Templemore gave one look at the gig as it conveyed Clara on board, and ordering Hawkhurst and Francisco to be taken to the launch, and a guard to be kept over them, went up, with the remainder of the men, in pursuit of the pirates.

During the scene we have described, the other boats of the men-of-war had landed on the island, and the *Avenger's* crew, deprived of their leaders, and scattered in every direction, were many of them slain or captured. In about two hours it was supposed that the majority of the pirates had been accounted for, and the prisoners being now very numerous, it was decided that the boats should return with them to the *Comus*, the captain of which vessel, as commanding-officer, would then issue orders as to their future proceedings.

The captured pirates, when mustered on the deck of the *Comus*, amounted to nearly sixty, out of which number one-half were those who had been sent on shore wounded, and had surrendered without resistance. Of killed there were fifteen; and it was conjectured that as many more had been drowned in the boat when she was sunk by the shot from the carronade of the launch. Although, by the account given by the captured pirates, the majority were secured, yet there was reason to suppose that some were still left on the island concealed in the caves.

As the captain of the *Comus* had orders to return as soon as possible, he decided to sail immediately for Port Royal with the prisoners, leaving the *Enterprise* to secure the remainder, if there were any, and recover anything of value which might be left in the wreck of the *Avenger*, and then to destroy her.

With the usual celerity of the service these orders were obeyed. The pirates, among whom Francisco was included, were secured, the boats hoisted up, and in half-an-hour the

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*Comus* displayed her ensign, and made all sail on a wind, leaving Edward Templemore, with the *Enterprise*, at the back of the reef, to perform the duties entailed upon him; and Clara, who was on board of the schooner to remove the suspicion and jealousy which had arisen in the bosom of her lover.

## CHAPTER XVII

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IN a week, the *Comus* arrived at Port Royal, and the captain went up to the Penn to inform the admiral of the successful result of the expedition.

"Thank God," said the admiral, "we have caught these villains at last! A little hanging will do them no harm. The captain, you say, was drowned?"

"So it is reported, sir," replied Captain Manly; "he was in the last boat which left the schooner, and she was sunk by a shot from the launch."

"I am sorry for that; the death was too good for him. However, we must make an example of the rest; they must be tried by the Admiralty Court, which has the jurisdiction of the high seas. Send them on shore, Manly, and we wash our hands of them."

"Very good, sir; but there are still some left on the island, we have reason to believe, and the *Enterprise* is in search of them."

"By-the-bye, did Templemore find his lady?"

"Oh yes, sir; and—all's right, I believe: but I had very little to say to him on the subject."

"Humph!" replied the admiral. "I am glad to hear it. Well, send them on shore, Manly, to the proper authorities. If any more be found, they must be hung afterwards when Templemore brings them in. I am more pleased at having

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secured these scoundrels than if we had taken a French frigate."

About three weeks after this conversation, the secretary reported to the admiral that the *Enterprise* had made her number outside; but that she was becalmed, and would not probably be in until the evening.

"That's a pity," replied the admiral; "for the pirates are to be tried this morning. He may have more of them on board."

"Very true, sir; but the trial will hardly be over to-day: the judge will not be in court till one o'clock at the soonest."

"It's of little consequence, certainly; as it is, there are so many that they must be hanged by divisions. However, as he is within signal distance, let them telegraph 'Pirates now on trial.' He can pull on shore in his gig, if he pleases."

It was about noon on the same day that the pirates, and among them Francisco, escorted by a strong guard, were conducted to the court-house and placed at the bar. The court-house was crowded to excess, for the interest excited was intense.

Many of them who had been wounded in the attack upon the property of Don Cumanos, and afterwards captured, had died in their confinement. Still forty-five were placed at the bar; and their picturesque costume, their bearded faces, and the atrocities which they had committed, created in those present a sensation of anxiety mingled with horror and indignation.

Two of the youngest amongst them had been permitted to turn king's evidence. They had been on board of the *Avenger* but a few months; still their testimony as to the murder of the crews of three West India ships, and the attack upon the property of Don Cumanos, was quite sufficient to condemn the remainder.

Much time was necessarily expended in going through the forms of the court; in the pirates answering to their various names; and, lastly, in taking down the detailed evidence of

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the above men. It was late when the evidence was read over to the pirates, and they were asked if they had anything to offer in their defence. The question was repeated by the judge; when Hawkhurst was the first to speak. To save himself he could scarcely hope; his only object was to prevent Francisco pleading his cause successfully, and escaping the same disgraceful death.

Hawkhurst declared that he had been some time on board the *Avenger*, but that he had been taken out of a vessel and forced to serve against his will, as could be proved by the captain's son, who stood there (pointing to Francisco), who had been in the schooner since her first fitting out: that he had always opposed the captain, who would not part with him, because he was the only one on board who was competent to navigate the schooner: that he had intended to rise against him, and take the vessel, having often stimulated the crew so to do; and that, as the other men, as well as the captain's son, could prove, if they chose, he actually was in confinement for that attempt when the schooner was entering the passage to the Caicos; and that he was only released because he was acquainted with the passage, and threatened to be thrown overboard if he did not take her in: that, at every risk, he had run her on the rocks; and aware that the captain would murder him, he had shot Cain as he was swimming to the shore, as the captain's son could prove; for he had taxed him with it, and he was actually struggling with him for life, when the officers and boats' crew separated them, and made them both prisoners: that he hardly expected that Francisco, the captain's son, would tell the truth to save him, as he was his bitter enemy, and in the business at the Magdalen river, which had been long planned (for Francisco had been sent on shore under the pretence of being wrecked, but, in fact, to ascertain where the booty was, and to assist the pirates in their attack), Francisco had taken the opportunity of putting a bullet through his shoulder, which was well known to the other pirates, and Francisco could not



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venture to deny. He trusted that the court would order the torture to Francisco, and then he would probably speak the truth ; at all events, let him speak now.

When Hawkhurst had ceased to address the court, there was an anxious pause for some minutes. The day was fast declining, and most parts of the spacious court-house were already deeply immersed in gloom ; while the light, sober, solemn, and almost sad, gleamed upon the savage and reckless countenances of the prisoners at the bar. The sun had sunk down behind a mass of heavy yet gorgeous clouds, fringing their edges with molten gold. Hawkhurst had spoken fluently and energetically, and there was an appearance of almost honesty in his coarse and deep-toned voice. Even the occasional oaths with which his speech was garnished, but which we have omitted, seemed to be pronounced more in sincerity than in blasphemy, and gave a more forcible impression to his narrative.

We have said, that when he concluded there was a profound silence ; and amid the fast-falling shadows of the evening, those who were present began to feel, for the first time, the awful importance of the drama before them, the number of lives which were trembling upon the verge of existence, depending upon the single word of "Guilty." This painful silence, this harrowing suspense, was at last broken by a restrained sob from a female ; but, owing to the obscurity involving the body of the court, her person could not be distinguished. The wail of woman so unexpected—for who could there be of that sex interested in the fate of these desperate men?—touched the heart of its auditors, and appeared to sow the first seeds of compassionate and humane feeling among those who had hitherto expressed and felt nothing but indignation towards the prisoners.

The judge upon the bench, the counsel at the bar, and the jury impannelled in their box, felt the force of the appeal ; and it softened down the evil impression created by the address of Hawkhurst against the youthful Francisco.

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The eyes of all were now directed towards the one doubly accused—accused not only by the public prosecutor, but even by his associate in crime—and the survey was favourable. They acknowledged that he was one whose personal qualities might indeed challenge the love of woman in his pride, and her lament in his disgrace; and as their regard was directed towards him, the sun, which had been obscured, now pierced through a break in the mass of clouds, and threw a portion of his glorious beams from a window opposite upon him, and him alone, while all the other prisoners who surrounded him were buried more or less in deep shadow. It was at once evident that his associates were bold yet commonplace villains—men who owed their courage, their only virtue perhaps, to their habits, to their physical organisation, or the influence of those around them. They were mere human butchers, with the only adjunct that, now that the trade was to be exercised upon themselves, they could bear it with sullen apathy—a feeling how far removed from true fortitude! Even Hawkhurst, though more commanding than the rest, with all his daring mien and scowl of defiance, looked nothing more than a distinguished ruffian. With the exception of Francisco, the prisoners had wholly neglected their personal appearance; and in them the squalid and sordid look of the mendicant seemed allied with the ferocity of the murderer.

Francisco was not only an exception, but formed a beautiful contrast to the others; and as the evening beams lighted up his figure, he stood at the bar, if not with all the splendour of a hero of romance, certainly a most picturesque and interesting personage, elegantly if not richly attired.

The low sobs at intervals repeated, as if impossible to be checked, seemed to rouse and call him to a sense of the important part which he was called upon to act in the tragedy there and then performing. His face was pale, yet composed; his mien at once proud and sorrowful; his eye was bright, yet his glance was not upon those in court, but far away,

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fixed, like an eagle's, upon the gorgeous beams of the setting sun, which glowed upon him through the window that was in front of him.

At last the voice of Francisco was heard, and all in that wide court started at the sound—deep, full, and melodious as the evening chimes. The ears of those present had, in the profound silence, but just recovered from the harsh, deep-toned, and barbarous idiom of Hawkhurst's address, when the clear, silvery, yet manly voice of Francisco riveted their attention. The jury stretched forth their heads, the counsel and all in court turned anxiously round towards the prisoner, even the judge held up his forefinger to intimate his wish for perfect silence.

“My lord and gentlemen,” commenced Francisco, “when I first found myself in this degrading situation, I had not thought to have spoken or to have uttered one word in my defence. He that has just now accused me has recommended the torture to be applied; he has already had his wish, for what torture can be more agonising than to find myself where I now am? So tortured, indeed, have I been through a short yet wretched life, that I have often felt that anything short of self-destruction which would release me would be a blessing; but within these few minutes I have been made to acknowledge that I have still feelings in unison with my fellow-creatures; that I am not yet fit for death, and all too young, too unprepared to die: for who would not reluctantly leave this world while there is such a beauteous sky to love and look upon, or while there is one female breast who holds him innocent, and has evinced her pity for his misfortunes? Yes, my lord! mercy, and pity, and compassion, have not yet fled from earth; and therefore do I feel I am too young to die. God forgive me! but I thought they had—for never have they been shown in those with whom by fate I have been connected; and it has been from this conviction that I have so often longed for death. And now may that righteous God who judges us not here, but hereafter, enable me to

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prove that I do not deserve an ignominious punishment from my fellow-sinners—men !

“ My lord, I know not the subtleties of the laws, nor the intricacy of pleadings. First, let me assert that I have never robbed ; but I have restored unto the plundered : I have never murdered ; but I have stood between the assassin’s knife and his victim. For this have I been hated and reviled by my associates, and for this is my life now threatened by those laws against which I never have offended. The man who last addressed you has told you that I am the pirate captain’s son ; it is the assertion of the only irreclaimable and utterly remorseless villain among those who now stand before you to be judged—the assertion of one whose glory, whose joy, whose solace, has been blood-shedding.

“ My lord, I had it from the mouth of the captain himself, previous to his murder by that man, that I was not his son. His son ! thank God, not so. Connected with him and in his power I was most certainly and most incomprehensibly. Before he died, he delivered me a packet that would have told me who I am ; but I have lost it, and deeply have I felt the loss. One only fact I gained from him whom they would call my father, which is, that with his own hand he slew—yes, basely slew—my mother.”

The address of Francisco was here interrupted by a low deep groan of anguish, which startled the whole audience. It was now quite dark, and the judge ordered the court to be lighted previous to the defence being continued. The impatience and anxiety of those present were shown in low murmurs of communication until the lights were brought in. The word “ Silence ! ” from the judge produced an immediate obedience, and the prisoner was ordered to proceed.

Francisco then continued his address, commencing with the remembrances of his earliest childhood. As he warmed with his subject he became more eloquent ; his action became energetical without violence ; and the pallid and modest youth gradually grew into the impassioned and in-

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spired orator. He recapitulated rapidly, yet distinctly and with terrible force, all the startling events in his fearful life. There was truth in the tones of his voice, there was conviction in his animated countenance, there was innocence in his open and expressive brow.

All who heard believed ; and scarcely had he concluded his address, when the jury appeared impatient to rise and give their verdict in his favour. But the judge stood up, and addressing the jury, told them that it was his most painful duty to remind them that as yet they had heard but assertion, beautiful and almost convincing assertion truly ; but still it was not proof.

"Alas !" observed Francisco, "what evidence can I bring forward, except the evidence of those around me at the bar, which will not be admitted ? Can I recall the dead from the grave ? Can I expect those who have been murdered to rise again to assert my innocence ? Can I expect that Don Cumanos will appear from distant leagues to give evidence on my behalf ? Alas ! he knows not how I am situated, or he would have flown to my succour. No, no ; not even can I expect that the sweet Spanish maiden, the last to whom I offered my protection, will appear in such a place as this to meet the bold gaze of hundreds !"

"She is here !" replied a manly voice ; and a passage was made through the crowd ; and Clara, supported by Edward Templemore, dressed in his uniform, was ushered into the box for the witnesses. The appearance of the fair girl, who looked round her with alarm, created a great sensation. As soon as she was sufficiently composed she was sworn, and gave her evidence as to Francisco's behaviour during the time that she was a prisoner on board of the *Avenger*. She produced the packet which had saved the life of Francisco, and substantiated a great part of his defence. She extolled his kindness and his generosity ; and when she had concluded every one asked of himself, "Can this young man be a pirate and a murderer ?" The reply was, "It is impossible."

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"My lord," said Edward Templemore, "I request permission to ask the prisoner a question. When I was on board of the wreck of the *Avenger*, I found this book floating in the cabin. I wish to ask the prisoner whether, as that young lady has informed me, it is his?" And Edward Templemore produced the Bible.

"It is mine," replied Francisco.

"May I ask you by what means it came into your possession?"

"It is the only relic left of one who is now no more. It was the consolation of my murdered mother; it has since been mine. Give it to me, sir; I may probably need its support now more than ever."

"Was your mother murdered, say you?" cried Edward Templemore, with much agitation.

"I have already said so; and I now repeat it."

The judge again rose, and recapitulated the evidence to the jury. Evidently friendly to Francisco, he was obliged to point out to them, that although the evidence of the young lady had produced much which might be offered in extenuation, and induce him to submit it to his Majesty, in hopes of his gracious pardon after condemnation, yet, that many acts in which the prisoner had been involved had endangered his life, and no testimony had been brought forward to prove that he had not, at one time, acted with the pirates, although he might since have repented. They would, of course, remember that the evidence of the mate, Hawkhurst, was not of any value, and must dismiss any impression which it might have made against Francisco. At the same time he had the unpleasant duty to point out, that the evidence of the Spanish lady was so far prejudicial, that it pointed out the good terms subsisting between the young man and the pirate captain. Much as he was interested in his fate, he must reluctantly remind the jury, that the evidence on the whole was not sufficient to clear the prisoner; and he considered it their duty to return a verdict of *guilty against all the prisoners at the bar.*



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"My lord," said Edward Templemore, a few seconds after the judge had resumed his seat, "may not the contents of this packet, the seal of which I have not ventured to break, afford some evidence in favour of the prisoner? Have you any objection that it should be opened previous to the jury delivering their verdict?"

"None," replied the judge; "but what are its supposed contents?"

"The contents, my lord," replied Francisco, "are in the writing of the pirate captain. He delivered that packet into my hands previous to our quitting the schooner, stating that it would inform me who were my parents. My lord, in my present situation I claim that packet, and refuse that its contents shall be read in court. If I am to die an ignominious death, at least those who are connected with me shall not have to blush at my disgrace, for the secret of my parentage shall die with me."

"Nay—nay; be ruled by me," replied Edward Templemore, with much emotion. "In the narrative, the handwriting of which can be proved by the king's evidence, there may be acknowledgment of all you have stated, and it will be received as evidence; will it not, my lord?"

"If the handwriting is proved, I should think it may," replied the judge; "particularly as the lady was present when the packet was delivered, and heard the captain's assertion. Will you allow it to be offered as evidence, young man?"

"No, my lord," replied Francisco; "unless I have permission first to peruse it myself. I will not have its contents divulged, unless I am sure of an honourable acquittal. The jury must deliver their verdict."

The jury turned round to consult, during which Edward Templemore walked to Francisco, accompanied by Clara, to entreat him to allow the packet to be opened; but Francisco was firm against both their entreaties. At last the foreman of the jury rose to deliver the verdict. A solemn and awful

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silence prevailed throughout the court; the suspense was painful to a degree.

"My lord," said the foreman of the jury, "our verdict is——"

"Stop, sir!" said Edward Templemore, as he clasped one arm round the astonished Francisco, and extended the other towards the foreman. "Stop, sir! harm him not! for he is my brother!"

"And my preserver!" cried Clara, kneeling on the other side of Francisco, and holding up her hands in supplication.

The announcement was electrical; the foreman dropped into his seat; the judge and whole court were in mute astonishment. The dead silence was followed by confusion, which, after a time, the judge in vain attempted to put a stop to.

Edward Templemore, Clara, and Francisco, continued to form the same group; and never was there one more beautiful. And now that they were together, every one in court perceived the strong resemblance between the two young men.

Francisco's complexion was darker than Edward's, from his constant exposure, from infancy, to tropical sun; but the features of the two were the same.

It was some time before the judge could obtain silence in the court; and when it had been obtained, he was himself puzzled how to proceed.

Edward and Francisco, who had exchanged a few words, were now standing side by side.

"My lord," said Edward Templemore, "the prisoner consents that the packet shall be opened."

"I do," said Francisco mournfully; "although I have but little hope from its contents. Alas! now that I have everything to live for—now that I cling to life, I feel as if every chance was gone! The days of miracles have passed; and nothing but the miracle of the reappearance of the pirate captain from the grave can prove my innocence."

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"He reappears from the grave to prove thine innocence, Francisco!" said a deep, hollow voice, which startled the whole court, and most of all Hawkhurst and the prisoners at the bar. Still more did fear and horror distort their countenances when into the witness-box stalked the giant form of Cain.

But it was no longer the figure which we have described in the commencement of this narrative; his beard had been removed, and he was pale, wan, and emaciated. His sunken eyes, his hollow cheek, and a short cough, which interrupted his speech, proved that his days were nearly at a close.

"My lord," said Cain, addressing the judge, "I am the pirate Cain, and was the captain of the *Avenger*! Still am I free! I come here voluntarily, that I may attest the innocence of that young man! As yet, my hand has not known the manacle, nor my feet the gyves! I am not a prisoner, nor included in the indictment, and at present my evidence is good. None know me in this court, except those whose testimony, as prisoners, is unavailing; and therefore, to save that boy, and only to save him, I demand that I may be sworn."

The oath was administered with more than usual solemnity.

"My lord, and gentlemen of the jury, I have been in court since the commencement of the trial, and I declare that every word which Francisco has uttered in his own defence is true. He is totally innocent of any act of piracy or murder; the packet would, indeed, have proved as much: but in that packet there are secrets which I wished to remain unknown to all but Francisco; and, rather than it should be opened, I have come forward myself. How that young officer discovered that Francisco is his brother I know not; but if he also is the son of Cecilia Templemore, it is true. But the packet will explain all.

"And now, my lords, that my evidence is received, I am content; I have done one good deed before I die, and I surrender myself, as a pirate and a foul murderer, to justice.

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True, my life is nearly closed—thanks to that villain there ; but I prefer that I should meet that death I merit, as an expiation of my many deeds of guilt.”

Cain then turned to Hawkhurst, who was close to him, but the mate appeared to be in a state of stupor ; he had not recovered from his first terror, and still imagined the appearance of Cain to be supernatural.

“Villain !” exclaimed Cain, putting his mouth close to Hawkhurst’s ear ; “doubly d—d villain ! thou’lt die like a dog, and unrevenged ! The boy is safe, and I’m alive !”

“Art thou really living ?” said Hawkhurst, recovering from his fear.

“Yes, living—yes, flesh and blood ; feel, wretch ! feel this arm, and be convinced ; thou hast felt the power of it before now,” continued Cain sarcastically. “And now, my lord, I have done ; Francisco, fare thee well ! I loved thee, and have proved my love. Hate not then my memory, and forgive me—yes, forgive me when I’m no more,” said Cain, who then turned his eyes to the ceiling of the court-house. “Yes, there she is, Francisco !—there she is ! and see,” cried he, extending both arms above his head, “she smiles upon—yes, Francisco, your sainted mother smiles and pardons——”

The sentence was not finished ; for Hawkhurst, when Cain’s arms were upheld, perceived his knife in his girdle, and, with the rapidity of thought, he drew it out, and passed it through the body of the pirate captain.

Cain fell heavily on the floor, while the court was again in confusion. Hawkhurst was secured, and Cain raised from the ground.

“I thank thee, Hawkhurst !” said Cain, in an expiring voice ; “another murder thou hast to answer for ; and you have saved me from the disgrace, not of the gallows, but of the gallows in thy company. Francisco, boy, farewell !” and Cain groaned deeply, and expired.

Thus perished the renowned pirate captain, who in his

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life had shed so much blood, and whose death produced another murder. "Blood for blood!"

The body was removed; and it now remained but for the jury to give their verdict. All the prisoners were found guilty, with the exception of Francisco, who left the dock accompanied by his newly-found brother, and the congratulations of every individual who could gain access to him.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### CONCLUSION

OUR first object will be to explain to the reader by what means Edward Templemore was induced to surmise that in Francisco, whom he had considered as a rival, he had found a brother; and also to account for the reappearance of the pirate Cain.

In pursuance of his orders, Edward Templemore had proceeded on board of the wreck of the *Avenger*; and while his men were employed in collecting articles of great value which were on board of her, he had descended into the cabin, which was partly under water. Here he had picked up a book floating near the lockers, and on examination found it to be a Bible.

Surprised at seeing such a book on board of a pirate, he had taken it with him when he returned to the *Enterprise*, and had shown it to Clara, who immediately recognised it as the property of Francisco. The book was saturated with the salt water, and as Edward mechanically turned over the pages, he referred to the title-page to see if there was any name upon it. There was not; but he observed that the blank or fly-leaf next to the binding had been pasted down, and that there was writing on the other side. In its present state it was easily detached from the cover; and then, to his astonishment, he read the name of Cecilia Templemore—

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his own mother. He knew well the history ; how he had been saved, and his mother and brother supposed to be lost ; and it may readily be imagined how great was his anxiety to ascertain by what means her Bible had come into the possession of Francisco. He dared not think Francisco was his brother—that he was so closely connected with one he still supposed to be a pirate : but the circumstance was possible ; and although he had intended to have remained a few days longer, he now listened to the entreaties of Clara, whose peculiar position on board was only to be justified by the peculiar position from which she had been rescued, and returning that evening to the wreck he set fire to her, and then made all sail for Port Royal.

Fortunately he arrived, as we have stated, on the day of the trial ; and as soon as the signal was made by the admiral he immediately manned his gig, and taking Clara with him, in case her evidence might be of use, arrived at the courthouse when the trial was about half over.

In our last chapter but one, we stated that Cain had been wounded by Hawkhurst, when he was swimming on shore, and had sunk ; the ball had entered his chest, and passed through his lungs. The contest between Hawkhurst and Francisco, and their capture by Edward, had taken place on the other side of the ridge of rocks, in the adjacent cove, and although Francisco had seen Cain disappear, and concluded that he was dead, it was not so ; he had again risen above the water, and dropping his feet and finding bottom, he contrived to crawl out, and wade into a cave adjacent, where he lay down to die.

But in this cave there was one of the *Avenger's* boats, two of the pirates, mortally wounded, and the four Kroumen, who had concealed themselves there with the intention of taking no part in the conflict, and as soon as it became dark of making their escape in the boat, which they had hauled up dry into the cave.

Cain staggered in, recovered the dry land, and fell.



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Pompey, the Krouman, perceiving his condition, went to his assistance and bound up his wound, and the stanching of the blood soon revived the pirate captain. The other pirates died unaided.

Although the island was searched in every direction, this cave, from the water flowing into it, escaped the vigilance of the British seamen; and when they re-embarked with the majority of the pirates captured, Cain and the Kroumen were undiscovered.

As soon as it was dark Cain informed them of his intentions; and although the Kroumen would probably have left him to his fate, yet, as they required his services to know how to steer to some other island, he was assisted into the stern-sheets, and the boat was backed out of the cave.

By the directions of Cain they passed through the passage between the great island and the northern Caique, and before daylight were far away from any chance of capture.

Cain had now to a certain degree recovered, and knowing that they were in the channel of the small traders, he pointed out to the Kroumen that, if supposed to be pirates, they would inevitably be punished, although not guilty, and that they must pass off as the crew of a small coasting-vessel which had been wrecked. He then, with the assistance of Pompey, cut off his beard as close as he could, and arranged his dress in a more European style. They had neither water nor provisions, and were exposed to a vertical sun. Fortunately for them, and still more fortunately for Francisco, on the second day they were picked up by an American brig bound to Antigua.

Cain narrated his fictitious disasters, but said nothing about his wound, the neglect of which would certainly have occasioned his death a very few days after he appeared at the trial, had he not fallen by the malignity of Hawkhurst.

Anxious to find his way to Port Royal, for he was indifferent as to his own life, and only wished to save Francisco, he was overjoyed to meet a small schooner trading between

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the islands, bound to Port Royal. In that vessel he obtained a passage for himself and the Kroumen, and had arrived three days previous to the trial, and during that time had remained concealed until the day that the Admiralty Court assembled.

It may be as well here to remark that Cain's reason for not wishing the packet to be opened was, that among the other papers relative to Francisco were directions for the recovery of the treasure which he had concealed, and which, of course, he wished to be communicated to Francisco alone.

We will leave the reader to imagine what passed between Francisco and Edward after the discovery of their kindred, and proceed to state the contents of the packet, which the twin-brothers now opened in the presence of Clara alone.

We must, however, condense the matter, which was very voluminous. It stated that Cain, whose real name was Charles Osborne, had sailed in a fine schooner from Bilboa, for the coast of Africa, to procure a cargo of slaves; and had been out about twenty-four hours when the crew perceived a boat, apparently with no one in her, floating about a mile ahead of them. The water was then smooth, and the vessel had but little way. As soon as they came up with the boat, they lowered down their skiff to examine her.

The men sent in the skiff soon returned, towing the boat alongside. Lying at the bottom of the boat were found several men almost dead, and reduced to skeletons, and in the stern-sheets a negro woman, with a child at her breast, and a white female in the last state of exhaustion.

Osborne was then a gay and unprincipled man, but not a hardened villain and murderer, as he afterwards became; he had compassion and feeling. They were all taken on board the schooner: some recovered, others were too much exhausted. Among those restored was Cecilia Templemore and the infant, who at first had been considered quite dead; but the negro woman, exhausted by the demands of her nursling and her privations, expired as she was being removed

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from the boat. A goat, that fortunately was on board, proved a substitute for the negress; and before Osborne had arrived off the coast, the child had recovered its health and vigour, and the mother her extreme beauty.

We must now pass over a considerable portion of the narrative. Osborne was impetuous in his passions, and Cecilia Templemore became his victim. He had, indeed, afterwards quieted her qualms of conscience by a pretended marriage, when he arrived at the Brazils with his cargo of human flesh. But that was little alleviation of her sufferings; she who had been indulged in every luxury, who had been educated with the greatest care, was now lost for ever, an outcast from the society to which she could never hope to return, and associating with those she both dreaded and despised. She passed her days and her nights in tears; and had soon more cause for sorrow from the brutal treatment she received from Osborne, who had been her destroyer. Her child was her only solace; but for him, and the fear of leaving him to the demoralising influence of those about him, she would have laid down and died. but she lived for him—for him attempted to recall Osborne from his career of increasing guilt—bore meekly with reproaches and with blows. At last Osborne changed his nefarious life for one of deeper guilt: he became a pirate, and still carried with him Cecilia and her child.

This was the climax of her misery; she now wasted from day to day, and grief would soon have terminated her existence, had it not been hastened by the cruelty of Cain, who, upon an expostulation on her part, followed up with a denunciation of the consequences of his guilty career, struck her with such violence that she sank under the blow. She expired with a prayer that her child might be rescued from a life of guilt; and when the then repentant Cain promised what he never did perform, she blessed him, too, before she died.

Such was the substance of the narrative, as far as it related

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to the unfortunate mother of these two young men, who, when they had concluded, sat hand-in-hand in mournful silence. This, however, was soon broken by the innumerable questions asked by Edward of his brother, as to what he could remember of their ill-fated parent, which were followed up by the history of Francisco's eventful life.

"And the treasure, Edward," said Francisco; "I cannot take possession of it."

"No, nor shall you either," replied Edward; "it belongs to the captors, and must be shared as prize-money. You will never touch one penny of it; but I shall, I trust, pocket a very fair proportion of it! However, keep this paper, as it is addressed to you."

The admiral had been made acquainted with all the particulars of this eventful trial, and had sent a message to Edward, requesting that, as soon as he and his brother could make it convenient, he would be happy to see them at the Penn, as well as the daughter of the Spanish governor, whom he must consider as being under his protection during the time that she remained at Port Royal. This offer was gladly accepted by Clara; and on the second day after the trial they proceeded up to the Penn. Clara and Francisco were introduced, and apartments and suitable attendance provided for the former.

"Templemore," said the admiral, "I'm afraid I must send you away to Porto Rico, to assure the governor of his daughter's safety."

"I would rather you would send some one else, sir, and I'll assure her happiness in the meantime."

"What! by marrying her? Humph! you've a good opinion of yourself! Wait till you're a captain, sir."

"I hope I shall not have to wait long, sir," replied Edward demurely.

"By-the-bye," said the admiral, "did you not say you have notice of treasure concealed in those islands?"

"My brother has: I have not."

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"We must send for it. I think we must send you, Edward. Mr. Francisco, you must go with him."

"With pleasure, sir," replied Francisco, laughing; "but I think I'd rather wait till Edward is a captain! His wife and his fortune ought to come together. I think I shall not deliver up my papers until the day of his marriage!"

"Upon my word," said Captain Manly, "I wish, Templemore, you had your commission, for there seems so much depending on it—the young lady's happiness, my share of the prize-money, and the admiral's eighth. Really, admiral, it becomes a common cause; and I'm sure he deserves it!"

"So do I, Manly," replied the admiral; "and to prove that I have thought so, here comes Mr. Hadley with it in his hand: it only wants one little thing to complete it——"

"Which is your signature, admiral, I presume," replied Captain Manly, taking a pen full of ink, and presenting it to his senior officer.

"Exactly," replied the admiral, scribbling at the bottom of the paper; "and now—it does not want that. Captain Templemore, I wish you joy!"

Edward made a very low obeisance, as his flushed countenance indicated his satisfaction.

"I cannot give commissions, admiral," said Francisco, presenting a paper in return; "but I can give information—and you will find it not unimportant—for the treasure appears of great value."

"God bless my soul! Manly, you must start at daylight!" exclaimed the admiral; "why, there is enough to load your sloop! There!—read it!—and then I will write your orders, and enclose a copy of it, for fear of accident."

"That was to have been my fortune," said Francisco, with a grave smile; "but I would not touch it."

"Very right, boy!—a fine principle! But we are not quite so particular," said the admiral. "Now, where's the young lady? Let her know that dinner's on the table."

A fortnight after this conversation, Captain Manly re-

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turned with the treasure; and the *Enterprise*, commanded by another officer, returned from Porto Rico, with a letter from the governor in reply to one from the admiral, in which the rescue of his daughter by Edward had been communicated. The letter was full of thanks to the admiral, and compliments to Edward; and, what was of more importance, it sanctioned the union of the young officer with his daughter, with a dozen boxes of gold doubloons.

About six weeks after the above-mentioned important conversation, Mr. Witherington, who had been reading a voluminous packet of letters in his breakfast-room in Finsbury Square, pulled his bell so violently that old Jonathan thought his master must be out of his senses. This, however, did not induce him to accelerate his solemn and measured pace; and he made his appearance at the door, as usual, without speaking.

"Why don't that fellow answer the bell?" cried Mr. Witherington.

"I am here, sir," said Jonathan solemnly.

"Well, so you are! but, confound you! you come like the ghost of a butler! But who do you think is coming here, Jonathan?"

"I cannot tell, sir."

"But I can!—you solemn old——Edward's coming here!—coming home directly!"

"Is he to sleep in his old room, sir?" replied the imperturbable butler.

"No; the best bedroom! Why, Jonathan, he is married—he is made a captain—Captain Templemore!"

"Yes—sir."

"And he has found his brother, Jonathan; his twin-brother!"

"Yes—sir."

"His brother Francis—that was supposed to be lost! But it's a long story, Jonathan!—and a very wonderful one!—his poor mother has long been dead!"



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"*In caelo quies !*" said Jonathan, casting up his eyes.

"But his brother has turned up again."

"*Resurgam !*" said the butler.

"They will be here in ten days—so let everything be in readiness, Jonathan. God bless my soul!" continued the old gentleman, "I hardly know what I'm about. It's a Spanish girl, Jonathan!"

"What is, sir?"

"What is, sir!—why, Captain Templemore's wife; and he was tried as a pirate!"

"Who, sir?"

"Who, sir? why, Francis, his brother! Jonathan, you're a stupid old fellow!"

"Have you any further commands, sir?"

"No—no!—there—that'll do—go away."

And in three weeks after this conversation, Captain and Mrs. Templemore, and his brother Frank, were established in the house, to the great delight of Mr. Witherington; for he had long been tired of solitude and old Jonathan.

The twin-brothers were a comfort to him in his old age: they closed his eyes in peace—they divided his blessing and his large fortune—and thus ends our history of THE PIRATE!

## THE THREE CUTTERS



# THE THREE CUTTERS

## CHAPTER I

### CUTTER THE FIRST

READER, have you ever been at Plymouth? If you have, your eye must have dwelt with ecstasy upon the beautiful property of the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe: if you have not been at Plymouth, the sooner that you go there the better. At Mount Edgcumbe you will behold the finest timber in existence, towering up to the summits of the hills, and feathering down to the shingle on the beach. And from this lovely spot you will witness one of the most splendid panoramas in the world. You will see—I hardly know what you will not see—you will see Ram Head, and Cawsand Bay; and then you will see the Breakwater, and Drake's Island, and the Devil's Bridge below you; and the town of Plymouth and its fortifications, and the Hoe; and then you will come to the Devil's Point, round which the tide runs devilish strong; and then you will see the New Victualling Office,—about which Sir James Gordon used to stump all day, and take a pinch of snuff from every man who carried a box, which all were delighted to give, and he was delighted to receive, proving how much pleasure may be communicated merely by a pinch of snuff; and then you will see Mount Wise and Mutton Cove; the town of Devonport, with its magnificent dockyard and arsenals, North Corner, and the way which leads to Saltash. And you will see ships building and ships in

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ordinary ; and ships repairing and ships fitting ; and hulks and convict ships, and the guardship ; ships ready to sail and ships under sail ; besides lighters, men-of-war's boats, dock-yard-boats, bumboats, and shore-boats. In short, there is a great deal to see at Plymouth besides the sea itself : but what I particularly wish now is, that you will stand at the Battery of Mount Edgcumbe and look into Barn Pool below you, and there you will see, lying at single anchor, a cutter ; and you may also see, by her pendant and ensign, that she is a yacht.

Of all the amusements entered into by the nobility and gentry of our island there is not one so manly, so exciting, so patriotic, or so national as yacht-sailing. It is peculiar to England, not only from our insular position and our fine harbours, but because it requires a certain degree of energy and a certain amount of income rarely to be found elsewhere. It has been wisely fostered by our sovereigns, who have felt that the security of the kingdom is increased by every man being more or less a sailor, or connected with the nautical profession. It is an amusement of the greatest importance to the country, as it has much improved our ship-building and our ship-fitting, while it affords employment to our seamen and shipwrights. But if I were to say all that I could say in praise of yachts, I should never advance with my narrative. I shall therefore drink a bumper to the health of Admiral Lord Yarborough and the Yacht Club, and proceed.

You observe that this yacht is cutter-rigged, and that she sits gracefully on the smooth water. She is just heaving up her anchor ; her foresail is loose, all ready to cast her—in a few minutes she will be under way. You see that there are ladies sitting at the taffrail ; and there are five haunches of venison hanging over the stern. Of all amusements, give me yachting. But we must go on board. The deck, you observe, is of narrow deal planks as white as snow ; the guns are of polished brass ; the bitts and binnacles of mahogany ; she is painted with taste ; and all the mouldings are gilded. There is nothing wanting ; and yet how clear and unencumbered are

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her decks! Let us go below. This is the ladies' cabin: can anything be more tasteful or elegant? is it not luxurious? and, although so small, does not its very confined space astonish you, when you view so many comforts so beautifully arranged? This is the dining-room, and where the gentlemen repair. What can be more complete or *recherché*? And just peep into their state-rooms and bed-places. Here is the steward's room and the beaufet: the steward is squeezing lemons for the punch, and there is the champagne in ice; and by the side of the pail the long corks are ranged up, all ready. Now, let us go forwards: here are the men's berths, not confined as in a man-of-war. No; luxury starts from abaft, and is not wholly lost even at the fore-peak. This is the kitchen: is it not admirably arranged? What a *multum in parvo*! And how delightful are the fumes of the turtle-soup! At sea we do meet with rough weather at times; but, for roughing it out, give me a *yacht*. Now that I have shown you round the vessel, I must introduce the parties on board.

You observe that florid, handsome man, in white trousers and blue jacket, who has a telescope in one hand, and is sipping a glass of brandy and water which he has just taken off the skylight. That is the owner of the vessel, and a member of the Yacht Club. It is Lord B——: he looks like a sailor, and he does not much belie his looks; yet I have seen him in his robes of state at the opening of the House of Lords. The one near to him is Mr. Stewart, a lieutenant in the navy. He holds on by the rigging with one hand, because, having been actively employed all his life, he does not know what to do with hands which have nothing in them. He is a *protégé* of Lord B., and is now on board as sailing-master of the yacht.

That handsome, well-built man, who is standing by the binnacle, is a Mr. Hautaine. He served six years as midshipman in the navy, and did not like it. He then served six years in a cavalry regiment, and did not like it. He then married, and in a much shorter probation found that he did not like that. But he is very fond of yachts and other men's



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wives, if he does not like his own ; and wherever he goes, he is welcome.

That young man with an embroidered silk waistcoat and white gloves, bending to talk to one of the ladies, is a Mr. Vaughan. He is to be seen at Almack's, at Crockford's, and everywhere else. Everybody knows him, and he knows everybody. He is a little in debt, and yachting is convenient.

The one who sits by the lady is a relation of Lord B. ; you see at once what he is. He apes the sailor ; he has not shaved, because sailors have no time to shave every day ; he has not changed his linen, because sailors cannot change every day. He has a cigar in his mouth, which makes him half sick and annoys his company. He talks of the pleasure of a rough sea, which will drive all the ladies below—and then they will not perceive that he is more sick than themselves. He has the misfortune to be born to a large estate, and to be a *fool*. His name is Ossulton.

The last of the gentlemen on board whom I have to introduce is Mr. Seagrove. He is slightly made, with marked features full of intelligence. He has been brought up to the bar ; and has every qualification but application. He has never had a brief, nor has he a chance of one. He is the fiddler of the company, and he has locked up his chambers and come, by invitation of his lordship, to play on board of his yacht.

I have yet to describe the ladies—perhaps I should have commenced with them—I must excuse myself upon the principle of reserving the best to the last. All puppet-showmen do so ; and what is this but the first scene in my puppet-show ?

We will describe them according to seniority. That tall, thin, cross-looking lady of forty-five is a spinster, and sister to Lord B. She had been persuaded, very much against her will, to come on board ; but her notions of propriety would not permit her niece to embark under the protection of *only* her father. She is frightened at everything : if a rope is thrown down on the deck, up she starts, and cries, " Oh ! "

## CUTTER THE FIRST

if on the deck, she thinks the water is rushing in below ; if down below, and there is a noise, she is convinced there is danger ; and if it be perfectly still, she is sure there is something wrong. She fidgets herself and everybody, and is quite a nuisance with her pride and ill-humour ; but she has strict notions of propriety, and sacrifices herself as a martyr. She is the Hon. Miss Ossulton.

The lady who, when she smiles, shows so many dimples in her pretty oval face, is a young widow of the name of Lascelles. She married an old man to please her father and mother, which was very dutiful on her part. She was rewarded by finding herself a widow with a large fortune. Having married the first time to please her parents, she intends now to marry to please herself ; but she is very young, and is in no hurry.

That young lady with such a sweet expression of countenance is the Hon. Miss Cecilia Ossulton. She is lively, witty, and has no fear in her composition ; but she is very young yet, not more than seventeen—and nobody knows what she really is—she does not know herself. These are the parties who meet in the cabin of the yacht. The crew consists of ten fine seamen, the steward and the cook. There is also Lord B.'s valet, Mr. Ossulton's gentleman, and the lady's-maid of Miss Ossulton. There not being accommodation for them, the other servants have been left on shore.

The yacht is now under way, and her sails are all set. She is running between Drake's Island and the main. Dinner has been announced. As the reader has learnt something about the preparations, I leave him to judge whether it be not very pleasant to sit down to dinner in a yacht. The air has given everybody an appetite ; and it was not until the cloth was removed that the conversation became general.

"Mr. Seagrove," said his lordship, "you very nearly lost your passage ; I expected you last Thursday."

"I am sorry, my lord, that business prevented my sooner attending to your lordship's kind summons."

"Come, Seagrove, don't be nonsensical," said Hautaine ;

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"you told me yourself, the other evening, when you were talkative, that you had never had a brief in your life."

"And a very fortunate circumstance," replied Seagrove; "for if I had had a brief I should not have known what to have done with it. It is not my fault; I am fit for nothing but a commissioner. But still I had business, and very important business, too. I was summoned by Ponsonby to go with him to Tattersall's, to give my opinion about a horse he wishes to purchase, and then to attend him to Forest Wild to plead his cause with his uncle."

"It appears, then, that you were retained," replied Lord B.; "may I ask you whether your friend gained his cause?"

"No, my lord, he lost his cause, but he gained a suit."

"Expound your riddle, sir," said Cecilia Ossulton.

"The fact is, that old Ponsonby is very anxious that William should marry Miss Percival, whose estates join on to Forest Wild. Now, my friend William is about as fond of marriage as I am of law, and thereby issue was joined."

"But why were you to be called in?" inquired Mrs. Lascelles.

"Because, madam, as Ponsonby never buys a horse without consulting me——"

"I cannot see the analogy, sir," observed Miss Ossulton, senior, bridling up.

"Pardon me, madam: the fact is," continued Seagrove, "that, as I always have to back Ponsonby's horses, he thought it right that, in this instance, I should back him: he required special pleading, but his uncle tried him for the capital offence, and he was not allowed counsel. As soon as we arrived, and I had bowed myself into the room, Mr. Ponsonby bowed me out again—which would have been infinitely more jarring to my feelings, had not the door been left a-jar."

"Do anything but pun, Seagrove," interrupted Hautaine.

"Well then, I will take a glass of wine."

"Do so," said his lordship; "but recollect the whole company are impatient for your story."

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"I can assure you, my lord, that it was equal to any scene in a comedy."

Now be it observed that Mr. Seagrove had a great deal of comic talent; he was an excellent mimic, and could alter his voice almost as he pleased. It was a custom of his to act a scene as between other people, and he performed it remarkably well. Whenever he said that anything he was going to narrate was "as good as a comedy," it was generally understood by those who were acquainted with him that he was to be asked so to do. Cecilia Ossulton therefore immediately said, "Pray act it, Mr. Seagrove."

Upon which, Mr. Seagrove—premising that he had not only heard but also seen all that passed—changing his voice, and suiting the action to the word, commenced.

"It may," said he, "be called

'FIVE THOUSAND ACRES IN A RING-FENCE.'"

We shall not describe Mr. Seagrove's motions; they must be inferred from his words.

"'It will then, William,' observed Mr. Ponsonby, stopping, and turning to his nephew, after a rapid walk up and down the room with his hands behind him under his coat, so as to allow the tails to drop their perpendicular about three inches clear of his body, 'I may say, without contradiction, be the finest property in the county—five thousand acres in a ring-fence.'

"'I dare say it will, uncle,' replied William, tapping his foot, as he lounged in a green morocco easy-chair; 'and so, because you have set your fancy upon having these two estates enclosed together in a ring-fence, you wish that I should be also enclosed in a *ring*-fence.'

"'And a beautiful property it will be,' replied Mr. Ponsonby.

"'Which, uncle? the estate or the wife?'

"'Both, nephew, both; and I expect your consent.'

"'Uncle, I am not avaricious. Your present property is sufficient for me. With your permission, instead of doubling

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the property, and doubling myself, I will remain your sole heir and single.'

"Observe, William, such an opportunity may not occur again for centuries. We shall restore Forest Wild to its ancient boundaries. You know it has been divided nearly two hundred years. We now have a glorious, golden opportunity of re-uniting the two properties; and when joined, the estate will be exactly what it was when granted to our ancestors by Henry VIII., at the period of the Reformation. This house must be pulled down, and the monastery left standing. Then we shall have our own again, and the property without encumbrance.'

"Without encumbrance, uncle! You forget that there will be a wife.'

"And you forget that there will be five thousand acres in a ring-fence.'

"Indeed, uncle, you ring it too often in my ears that I should forget it. But, much as I should like to be the happy possessor of such a property, I do not feel inclined to be the happy possessor of Miss Percival; and the more so, as I have never seen the property.'

"We will ride over it to-morrow, William.'

"Ride over Miss Percival, uncle! That will not be very gallant. I will, however, one of these days ride over the property with you, which, as well as Miss Percival, I have not as yet seen.'

"Then I can tell you she is a very pretty property.'

"If she were not in a ring-fence.'

"In good heart, William. That is, I mean an excellent disposition.'

"Valuable in matrimony.'

"And well tilled—I should say well educated—by her three maiden aunts, who are the patterns of propriety.'

"Does any one follow the fashion?'

"In a high state of cultivation; that is, her mind highly cultivated, and according to the last new system—what is it?'

## CUTTER THE FIRST

“‘A four-course shift, I presume,’ replied William, laughing; ‘that is, dancing, singing, music, and drawing.’

“‘And only seventeen! Capital soil, promising good crops. What would you have more?’

“‘A very pretty estate, uncle, if it were not the estate of matrimony. I am sorry, very sorry, to disappoint you; but I must decline taking a lease of it for life.’

“‘Then, sir, allow me to hint to you that in my testament you are only a tenant-at-will. I consider it a duty that I owe to the family that the estate should be re-united. That can only be done by one of our family marrying Miss Percival; and as you will not, I shall now write to your cousin James, and if he accept my proposal, shall make *him* my heir. Probably he will more fully appreciate the advantages of five thousand acres in a ring-fence.’

“And Mr. Ponsonby directed his steps towards the door.

“‘Stop, my dear uncle,’ cried William, rising up from his easy chair; ‘we do not quite understand one another. It is very true that I would prefer half the property and remaining single, to the two estates and the estate of marriage; but at the same time I did not tell you that I would prefer beggary to a wife and five thousand acres in a ring-fence. I know you to be a man of your word. I accept your proposal, and you need not put my cousin James to the expense of postage.’

“‘Very good, William; I require no more: and as I know you to be a man of your word, I shall consider this match as settled. It was on this account only that I sent for you, and now you may go back again as soon as you please. I will let you know when all is ready.’

“‘I must be at Tattersall’s on Monday, uncle; there is a horse I must have for next season. Pray, uncle, may I ask when you are likely to want me?’

“‘Let me see—this is May—about July, I should think.’

“‘July, uncle! Spare me—I cannot marry in the dog-days. No, hang it! not July.’

“‘Well, William, perhaps, as you must come down once or



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twice to see the property—Miss Percival, I should say—it may be too soon—suppose we put it off till October?’

“‘October—I shall be down at Melton.’

“‘Pray, sir, may I then inquire what portion of the year is not, with you, *dog-days*?’

“‘Why, uncle, next April, now—I think that would do.’

“‘Next April! Eleven months, and a winter between. Suppose Miss Percival was to take a cold and die.’

“‘I should be excessively obliged to her,’ thought William.

“‘No, no!’ continued Mr. Ponsonby: ‘there is nothing certain in this world, William.’

“‘Well then, uncle, suppose we arrange it for the first *hard frost*.’

“‘We have had no hard frosts lately, William. We may wait for years. The sooner it is over the better. Go back to town, buy your horse, and then come down here, my dear William, to oblige your uncle—never mind the *dog-days*.’

“‘Well, sir, if I am to make a sacrifice, it shall not be done by halves; out of respect for you I will even marry in July, without any regard to the thermometer.’

“‘You are a good boy, William. Do you want a cheque?’

“‘I have had one to-day,’ thought William, and was almost at fault. ‘I shall be most thankful, sir—they sell horseflesh by the ounce nowadays.’

“‘And you pay in pounds. There, William.’

“‘Thank you, sir, I’m all obedience; and I’ll keep my word, even if there should be a comet. I’ll go and buy the horse, and then I shall be ready to take the ring-fence as soon as you please.’

“‘Yes, and you’ll get over it cleverly, I’ve no doubt. Five thousand acres, William, and—a pretty wife!’

“‘Have you any further commands, uncle?’ said William, depositing the cheque in his pocket-book.

“‘None, my dear boy; are you going?’

“‘Yes, sir; I dine at the Clarendon.’

“‘Well, then, good-bye. Make my compliments and

## CUTTER THE FIRST

excuses to your friend Seagrove. You will come on Tuesday or Wednesday.'

"Thus was concluded the marriage between William Ponsonby and Emily Percival, and the junction of the two estates, which formed together the great desideratum—*five thousand acres in a ring-fence.*"

Mr. Seagrove finished, and he looked round for approbation.

"Very good indeed, Seagrove," said his lordship; "you must take a glass of wine after that."

"I would not give much for Miss Percival's chance of happiness," observed the elder Miss Ossulton.

"Of two evils choose the least, they say," observed Mr. Hautaine. "Poor Ponsonby could not help himself."

"That's a very polite observation of yours, Mr. Hautaine—I thank you in the name of the sex," replied Cecilia Ossulton.

"Nay, Miss Ossulton; would you like to marry a person whom you never saw?"

"Most certainly not; but when you mentioned the two evils, Mr. Hautaine, I appeal to your honour, did you not refer to marriage or beggary?"

"I must confess it, Miss Ossulton; but it is hardly fair to call on my honour to get me into a scrape."

"I only wish that the offer had been made to me," observed Vaughan; "I should not have hesitated as Ponsonby did."

"Then I beg you will not think of proposing for me," said Mrs. Lascelles, laughing; for Mr. Vaughan had been excessively attentive.

"It appears to me, Vaughan," observed Seagrove, "that you have slightly committed yourself by that remark."

Vaughan, who thought so too, replied, "Mrs. Lascelles must be aware that I was only joking."

"Fie! Mr. Vaughan," cried Cecilia Ossulton; "you know it came from your heart."

"My dear Cecilia," said the elder Miss Ossulton, "you forget yourself—what can you possibly know about gentlemen's hearts?"

## THE THREE CUTTERS

"The Bible says that they are 'deceitful and desperately wicked,' aunt."

"And cannot we also quote the Bible against your sex, Miss Ossulton?" replied Seagrove.

"Yes, you could, perhaps, if any of you had ever read it," replied Miss Ossulton carelessly

"Upon my word, Cissy, you are throwing the gauntlet down to the gentlemen," observed Lord B.; "but I shall throw my warder down, and not permit this combat à l'outrance. I perceive you drink no more wine, gentlemen; we will take our coffee on deck."

"We were just about to retire, my lord," observed the elder Miss Ossulton, with great asperity; "I have been trying to catch the eye of Mrs. Lascelles for some time, but——"

"I was looking another way, I presume," interrupted Mrs. Lascelles, smiling.

"I am afraid that I am the unfortunate culprit," said Mr. Seagrove. "I was telling a little anecdote to Mrs. Lascelles——"

"Which, of course, from its being communicated in an undertone, was not proper for all the company to hear," replied the elder Miss Ossulton; "but if Mrs. Lascelles is now ready——" continued she, bridling up, as she rose from her chair.

"At all events, I can hear the remainder of it on deck," replied Mrs. Lascelles. The ladies rose and went into the cabin, Cecilia and Mrs. Lascelles exchanging very significant smiles as they followed the precise spinster, who did not choose that Mrs. Lascelles should take the lead merely because she had once happened to have been married. The gentlemen also broke up, and went on deck.

"We have a nice breeze now, my lord," observed Mr. Stewart, who had remained on deck, "and we lie right up Channel."

"So much the better," replied his lordship; "we ought to have been anchored at Cowes a week ago. They will all be there before us."

## CUTTER THE SECOND

"Tell Mr. Simpson to bring me a light for my cigar," said Mr. Ossulton to one of the men.

Mr. Stewart went down to his dinner; the ladies and the coffee came on deck; the breeze was fine, the weather (it was April) almost warm; and the yacht, whose name was the *Arrow*, assisted by the tide, soon left the Mewstone far astern.

## CHAPTER II

### CUTTER THE SECOND

READER, have you ever been at Portsmouth? If you have, you must have been delighted with the view from the saluting battery; and if you have not, you had better go there as soon as you can. From the saluting battery you may look up the harbour, and see much of what I have described at Plymouth; the scenery is different, but similar arsenals and dockyards, and an equal portion of our stupendous navy are to be found there; and you will see Gosport on the other side of the harbour, and Sallyport close to you; besides a great many other places, which, from the saluting battery, you cannot see. And then there is Southsea Beach to your left. Before you, Spithead, with the men-of-war, and the Motherbank crowded with merchant vessels; and there is the buoy where the *Royal George* was wrecked and where she still lies, the fish swimming in and out of her cabin windows; but that is not all; you can also see the Isle of Wight—Ryde with its long wooden pier, and Cowes, where the yachts lie. In fact, there is a great deal to be seen at Portsmouth as well as at Plymouth; but what I wish you particularly to see just now is a vessel holding fast to the buoy just off the saluting battery. She is a cutter; and you may know that she belongs to the Preventive Service by the number of gigs and galleys which she has hoisted up all round her. She looks like a vessel that was about to sail with a cargo

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of boats ; two on deck, one astern, one on each side of her. You observe that she is painted black, and all her boats are white. She is not such an elegant vessel as the yacht, and she is much more lumbered up. She has no haunches of venison hanging over the stern, but I think there is a leg of mutton and some cabbages hanging by their stalks. But revenue cutters are not yachts. You will find no turtle or champagne ; but, nevertheless, you will, perhaps, find a joint to carve at, a good glass of grog, and a hearty welcome.

Let us go on board. You observe the guns are iron, and painted black, and her bulwarks are painted red ; it is not a very becoming colour, but then it lasts a long while, and the dockyard is not very generous on the score of paint—or lieutenants of the navy troubled with much spare cash. She has plenty of men, and fine men they are ; all dressed in red flannel shirts and blue trousers ; some of them have not taken off their canvas or tarpaulin petticoats, which are very useful to them, as they are in the boats night and day, and in all weathers. But we will at once go down into the cabin, where we shall find the lieutenant who commands her, a master's mate, and a midshipman. They have each their tumbler before them, and are drinking gin-toddy, hot, with sugar—capital gin, too, 'bove proof ; it is from that small anker standing under the table. It was one that they forgot to return to the custom-house when they made their last seizure. We must introduce them.

The elderly personage, with grizzly hair and whiskers, a round pale face, and a somewhat red nose (being too much in the wind will make the nose red, and this old officer is very often "in the wind," of course, from the very nature of his profession), is a Lieutenant Appleboy. He has served in every class of vessel in the service, and done the duty of first lieutenant for twenty years ; he is now on promotion—that is to say, after he has taken a certain number of tubs of gin, he will be rewarded with his rank as commander. It is a pity that what he takes inside of him does not count, for he takes

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it morning, noon, and night. He is just filling his fourteenth glass : he always keeps a regular account, as he never exceeds his limited number, which is seventeen ; then he is exactly down to his bearings.

The master's mate's name is Tomkins ; he has served his six years three times over, and has now outgrown his ambition ; which is fortunate for him, as his chances of promotion are small. He prefers a small vessel to a large one, because he is not obliged to be so particular in his dress—and looks for his lieutenantcy whenever there shall be another charity promotion. He is fond of soft bread, for his teeth are all absent without leave ; he prefers porter to any other liquor, but he can drink his glass of grog, whether it be based upon rum, brandy, or the liquor now before him.

Mr. Smith is the name of that young gentleman whose jacket is so out at the elbows ; he has been intending to mend it these last two months, but is too lazy to go to his chest for another. He has been turned out of half the ships in the service for laziness ; but he was born so—and therefore it is not his fault. A revenue-cutter suits him, she is half her time hove-to ; and he has no objection to boat-service, as he sits down always in the stern-sheets, which is not fatiguing. Creeping for tubs is his delight, as he gets over so little ground. He is fond of grog, but there is some trouble in carrying the tumbler so often to his mouth ; so he looks at it, and lets it stand. He says little because he is too lazy to speak. He has served more than *eight years* ; but as for passing—it has never come into his head. Such are the three persons who are now sitting in the cabin of the revenue-cutter, drinking hot gin-toddy.

“ Let me see, it was, I think, in ninety-three or ninety-four. Before you were in the service, Tomkins——”

“ Maybe, sir ; it's so long ago since I entered, that I can't recollect dates—but this I know, that my aunt died three days before.”

“ Then the question is, When did your aunt die ? ”



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"Oh! she died about a year after my uncle."

"And when did your uncle die?"

"I'll be hanged if I know!"

"Then, d'ye see, you've no departure to work from. However, I think you cannot have been in the service at that time. We were not quite so particular about uniform as we are now."

"Then I think the service was all the better for it. Nowadays, in your crack ships, a mate has to go down in the hold or spirit-room, and after whipping up fifty empty casks, and breaking out twenty full ones, he is expected to come on quarter-deck as clean as if he was just come out of a band-box."

"Well, there's plenty of water alongside, as far as the outward man goes, and iron dust is soon brushed off. However, as you say, perhaps a little too much is expected; at least, in five of the ships in which I was first lieutenant, the captain was always hauling me over the coals about the midshipmen not dressing properly, as if I was their dry-nurse. I wonder what Captain Prigg would have said if he had seen such a turn-out as you, Mr. Smith, on his quarter-deck."

"I should have had one turn-out more," drawled Smith.

"With your out-at-elbows jacket, there, eh!" continued Mr. Appleboy.

Smith turned up his elbows, looked at one and then at the other; after so fatiguing an operation, he was silent.

"Well, where was I? Oh! it was about ninety-three or ninety-four, as I said, that it happened—Tomkins, fill your glass and hand me the sugar—how do I get on? This is No. 15," said Appleboy, counting some white lines on the table by him; and taking up a piece of chalk, he marked one more line on his tally. "I don't think this is so good a tub as the last, Tomkins, there's a twang about it—a want of juniper; however, I hope we shall have better luck this time. Of course you know we sail to-morrow?"

"I presume so, by the leg of mutton coming on board."

"True—true; I'm regular—as clockwork. After being twenty years a first lieutenant one gets a little method. I

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like regularity. Now the admiral has never omitted asking me to dinner once, every time I have come into harbour, except this time. I was so certain of it, that I never expected to sail; and I have but two shirts clean in consequence."

"That's odd, isn't it?—and the more so, because he has had such great people down here, and has been giving large parties every day."

"And yet I made three seizures, besides sweeping up those thirty-seven tubs."

"I swept them up," observed Smith.

"That's all the same thing, younker. When you've been a little longer in the service, you'll find out that the commanding officer has the merit of all that is done; but you're *green* yet. Let me see, where was I? Oh! it was about ninety-three or ninety-four, as I said. At that time I was in the Channel fleet—Tomkins, I'll trouble you for the hot water; this water's cold. Mr. Smith, do me the favour to ring the bell. Jem, some more hot water."

"Please, sir," said Jem, who was barefooted as well as bareheaded, touching the lock of hair on his forehead, "the cook has capsized the kettle—but he has put more on."

"Capsized the kettle! Hah!—very well—we'll talk about that to-morrow. Mr. Tomkins, do me the favour to put him in the report: I may forget it. And pray, sir, how long is it since he has put more on?"

"Just this moment, sir, as I came aft."

"Very well, we'll see to that to-morrow. You bring the kettle aft as soon as it is ready. I say, Mr. Jem, is that fellow sober?"

"Yees, sir, he be sober as you be."

"It's quite astonishing what a propensity the common sailors have to liquor. Forty odd years have I been in the service, and I've never found any difference. I only wish I had a guinea for every time that I have given a fellow seven-water grog during my servitude as first lieutenant, I wouldn't call the king my cousin. Well, if there's no hot

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water, we must take lukewarm; it won't do to heave to. By the Lord Harry! who would have thought it?—I'm at number sixteen! Let me count—yes!—surely I must have made a mistake. A fact, by Heaven!" continued Mr. Appleboy, throwing the chalk down on the table. "Only one more glass after this; that is, if I have counted right—I may have seen double."

"Yes," drawled Smith.

"Well, never mind. Let's go on with my story. It was either in the year ninety-three or ninety-four that I was in the Channel fleet; we were then abreast of Torbay——"

"Here be the hot water, sir," cried Jem, putting the kettle down on the deck.

"Very well, boy. By-the-bye, has the jar of butter come on board?"

"Yes, but it broke all down the middle. I tied him up with a rope-yarn."

"Who broke it, sir?"

"Coxswain says as how he didn't."

"But who did, sir?"

"Coxswain handed it up to Bill Jones, and he says as how he didn't."

"But who did, sir?"

"Bill Jones gave it to me, and I'm sure as how I didn't."

"Then who did, sir, I ask you?"

"I think it be Bill Jones, sir, 'cause he's fond of butter, I know, and there be very little left in the jar."

"Very well, we'll see to that to-morrow morning. Mr. Tomkins, you'll oblige me by putting the butter-jar down in the report, in case it should slip my memory. Bill Jones, indeed, looks as if butter wouldn't melt in his month. Never mind. Well, it was, as I said before—it was in the year ninety-three or ninety-four, when I was in the Channel fleet; we were then off Torbay, and had just taken two reefs in the top-sails. Stop—before I go on with my story, I'll take

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my last glass ; I think it's the last—let me count. Yes, by heavens ! I make out sixteen, well told. Never mind, it shall be a stiff one. Boy, bring the kettle, and mind you don't pour the hot water into my shoes, as you did the other night. There, that will do. Now, Tomkins, fill up yours ; and you, Mr. Smith. Let us all start fair, and then you shall have my story—and a very curious one it is, I can tell you ; I wouldn't have believed it myself, if I hadn't seen it. Hilloa ! what's this ? Confound it ! what's the matter with the toddy ? Heh, Mr. Tomkins ? ”

Mr. Tomkins tasted ; but, like the lieutenant, he had made it very stiff ; and, as he had also taken largely before, he was, like him, not quite so clear in his discrimination. “ It has a queer twang, sir ; Smith, what is it ? ”

Smith took up his glass, tasted the contents.

“ *Salt water*,” drawled the midshipman.

“ Salt water ! so it is, by heavens ! ” cried Mr. Appleboy.

“ Salt as Lot's wife ! by all that's infamous ! ” cried the master's mate.

“ Salt water, sir ! ” cried Jem in a fright, expecting a *salt* eel for supper.

“ Yes, sir,” replied Mr. Appleboy, tossing the contents of the tumbler in the boy's face, “ salt water. Very well, sir—very well ! ”

“ It warn't me, sir,” replied the boy, making up a piteous look.

“ No, sir, but you said the cook was sober.”

“ He was not so *very* much disguised, sir,” replied Jem.

“ Oh ! very well—never mind. Mr. Tomkins, in case I should forget it, do me the favour to put the kettle of salt water down in the report. The scoundrel ! I'm very sorry, gentlemen, but there's no means of having any more gin-toddy. But never mind, we'll see to this to-morrow. Two can play at this ; and if I don't salt-water their grog, and make them drink it too, I have been twenty years a first lieutenant for nothing, that's all. Good night, gentlemen ;

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and," continued the lieutenant, in a severe tone, "you'll keep a sharp look-out, Mr. Smith—do you hear, sir?"

"Yes," drawled Smith, "but it's not my watch; it was my first watch; and just now it struck one bell."

"You'll keep the middle watch, then, Mr. Smith," said Mr. Appleboy, who was not a little put out; "and, Mr. Tomkins, let me know as soon as it's daylight. Boy, get my bed made. Salt water, by all that's blue! However, we'll see to that to-morrow morning."

Mr. Appleboy then turned in; so did Mr. Tomkins; and so did Mr. Smith, who had no idea of keeping the middle watch because the cook was drunk and had filled up the kettle with salt water. As for what happened in ninety-three or ninety-four, I really would inform the reader if I knew; but I am afraid that that most curious story is never to be handed down to posterity.

The next morning Mr. Tomkins, as usual, forgot to report the cook, the jar of butter, and the kettle of salt water; and Mr. Appleboy's wrath had long been appeased before he remembered them. At daylight, the lieutenant came on deck, having only slept away half of the sixteen, and a taste of the seventeenth salt-water glass of gin-toddy. He rubbed his grey eyes, that he might peer through the grey of the morning; the fresh breeze blew about his grizzly locks, and cooled his rubicund nose. The revenue cutter, whose name was the *Active*, cast off from the buoy, and, with a fresh breeze, steered her course for the Needles' passage.

## CHAPTER III

### CUTTER THE THIRD

**READER!** have you been to St. Maloes? If you have, you were glad enough to leave the hole; and if you have not, take my advice, and do not give yourself the trouble to

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go and see that or any other French port in the Channel. There is not one worth looking at. They have made one or two artificial ports, and they are no great things; there is no getting out or getting in. In fact, they have no harbours in the Channel, while we have the finest in the world; a peculiar dispensation of Providence, because it knew that we should want them, and France would not. In France, what are called ports are all alike—nasty, narrow holes, only to be entered at certain times of tide and certain winds; made up of basins and back-waters, custom-houses, and cabarets; just fit for smugglers to run into, and nothing more; and, therefore, they are used for very little else.

Now, in the dog-hole called St. Maloes there is some pretty land, although a great deficiency of marine scenery. But never mind that. Stay at home, and don't go abroad to drink sour wine, because they call it Bordeaux, and eat villainous trash, so disguised by cooking that you cannot possibly tell which of the birds of the air, or beasts of the field, or fishes of the sea, you are cramming down your throat. "If all is right, there is no occasion for disguise," is an old saying; so depend upon it that there is something wrong, and that you are eating offal, under a grand French name. They eat everything in France, and would serve you up the head of a monkey who has died of the smallpox, as *singe au petite vérole*—that is, if you did not understand French; if you did, they would call it, *tête d'amour à l'Ethiopique*, and then you would be even more puzzled. As for their wine, there is no disguise in that; it's half vinegar. No, no! stay at home; you can live just as cheaply, if you choose; and then you will have good meat, good vegetables, good ale, good beer, and a good glass of grog; and, what is of more importance, you will be in good company. Live with your friends, and don't make a fool of yourself.

I would not have condescended to have noticed this place, had it not been that I wish you to observe a vessel which is lying along the pier-wharf, with a plank from the shore to



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her gunwale. It is low water, and she is aground, and the plank dips down at such an angle that it is a work of danger to go either in or out of her. You observe that there is nothing very remarkable in her. She is a cutter, and a good sea-boat, and sails well before the wind. She is short for her breadth of beam, and is not armed. Smugglers do not arm now—the service is too dangerous; they effect their purpose by cunning, not by force. Nevertheless, it requires that smugglers should be good seamen, smart, active fellows, and keen-witted, or they can do nothing. This vessel has not a large cargo in her, but it is valuable. She has some thousand yards of lace, a few hundred pounds of tea, a few bales of silk, and about forty ankers of brandy—just as much as they can land in one boat. All they ask is a heavy gale or a thick fog, and they trust to themselves for success.

There is nobody on board except a boy; the crew are all up at the cabaret, settling their little accounts of every description—for they smuggle both ways, and every man has his own private venture. There they are all, fifteen of them, and fine-looking fellows, too, sitting at that long table. They are very merry, but quite sober, as they are to sail to-night.

The captain of the vessel (whose name, by-the-bye, is the *Happy-go-lucky*—the captain christened her himself), is that fine-looking young man, with dark whiskers meeting under his throat. His name is Jack Pickersgill. You perceive at once that he is much above a common sailor in appearance. His manners are good, he is remarkably handsome, very clean, and rather a dandy in his dress. Observe how very politely he takes off his hat to that Frenchman, with whom he has just settled accounts; he beats Johnny Crapeau at his own weapons. And then there is an air of command, a feeling of conscious superiority, about Jack; see how he treats the landlord, *de haut en bas*, at the same time that he is very civil. The fact is, that Jack is of a very good old family, and received a very excellent education; but he was an orphan, his friends were poor, and could do but little for him; he

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went out to India as a cadet, ran away, and served in a schooner which smuggled opium into China, and then came home. He took a liking to the employment, and is now laying up a very pretty little sum: not that he intends to stop: no, as soon as he has enough to fit out a vessel for himself, he intends to start again for India, and with two cargoes of opium he will return, he trusts, with a handsome fortune, and re-assume his family name. Such are Jack's intentions; and, as he eventually means to reappear as a gentleman, he preserves his gentlemanly habits; he neither drinks, nor chews, nor smokes. He keeps his hands clean, wears rings, and sports a gold snuff-box; notwithstanding which, Jack is one of the boldest and best of sailors, and the men know it. He is full of fun, and as keen as a razor. Jack has a very heavy venture this time—all the lace is his own speculation, and if he gets it in safe, he will clear some thousands of pounds. A certain fashionable shop in London has already agreed to take the whole off his hands.

That short, neatly-made young man is the second in command, and the companion of the captain. He is clever, and always has a remedy to propose when there is a difficulty, which is a great quality in a second in command. His name is Corbett. He is always merry—half-sailor, half-tradesman; knows the markets, runs up to London, and does business as well as a chapman—lives for the day and laughs at to-morrow.

That little punchy old man, with long grey hair and fat face, with a nose like a note of interrogation, is the next personage of importance. He ought to be called the sailing-master, for, although he goes on shore in France, off the English coast he never quits the vessel. When they leave her with the goods, he remains on board; he is always to be found off any part of the coast where he may be ordered; holding his position in defiance of gales, and tides, and fogs: as for the revenue vessels, they all knew him well enough, but they cannot touch a vessel in ballast, if she has no more men on board than allowed by her tonnage. He knows

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every creek, and hole, and corner of the coast ; how the tide runs in—tide, half-tide, eddy, or current. That is his value. His name is Morrison.

You observe that Jack Pickersgill has two excellent supporters in Corbett and Morrison ; his other men are good seamen, active and obedient, which is all that he requires. I shall not particularly introduce them.

"Now you may call for another litre, my lads, and that must be the last ; the tide is flowing fast, and we shall be afloat in half-an-hour, and we have just the breeze we want. What d'ye think, Morrison, shall we have dirt ?"

"I've been looking just now, and if it were any other month in the year I should say yes ; but there's no trusting April, captain. Howsomever, if it does blow off, I'll promise you a fog in three hours afterwards."

"That will do as well. Corbett, have you settled with Duval ?"

"Yes, after more noise and *charivari* than a panic in the Stock Exchange would make in England. He fought and squabbled for an hour, and I found that, without some abatement, I never should have settled the affair."

"What did you let him off ?"

"Seventeen sous," replied Corbett, laughing.

"And that satisfied him ?" inquired Pickersgill.

"Yes—it was all he could prove to be a *surfaire* : two of the knives were a little rusty. But he will always have something off ; he could not be happy without it. I really think he would commit suicide if he had to pay a bill without a deduction."

"Let him live," replied Pickersgill. "Jeannette, a bottle of Volnay of 1811, and three glasses."

Jeannette, who was the *fille de cabaret*, soon appeared with a bottle of wine, seldom called for, except by the captain of the *Happy-go-lucky*.

"You sail to-night ?" said she, as she placed the bottle before him.

## CUTTER THE THIRD

Pickersgill nodded his head.

"I had a strange dream," said Jeannette; "I thought you were all taken by a revenue cutter, and put in a *cachot*. I went to see you, and I did not know one of you again—you were all changed."

"Very likely, Jeannette; you would not be the first who did not know their friends again when in misfortune. There was nothing strange in your dream."

"*Mais, mon Dieu ! je ne suis pas comme ça, moi.*"

"No, that you are not, Jeannette; you are a good girl, and some of these fine days I'll marry you," said Corbett.

"*Doit être bien beau ce jour là, par exemple,*" replied Jeannette, laughing; "you have promised to marry me every time you have come in these last three years."

"Well, that proves I keep to my promise, anyhow."

"Yes; but you never go any further."

"I can't spare him, Jeannette, that is the real truth," said the captain; "but wait a little,—in the meantime, here is a five-franc piece to add to your *petite fortune*."

"*Merci bien, monsieur le capitaine ; bon voyage !*" Jeannette held her finger up to Corbett, saying, with a smile, "*méchant !*" and then quitted the room.

"Come, Morrison, help us to empty this bottle, and then we will all go on board."

"I wish that girl wouldn't come here with her nonsensical dreams," said Morrison, taking his seat; "I don't like it. When she said that we should be taken by a revenue cutter, I was looking at a blue and a white pigeon sitting on the wall opposite; and I said to myself, Now, if that be a warning, I will see: if the *blue* pigeon flies away first, I shall be in jail in a week; if the *white*, I shall be back here."

"Well?" said Pickersgill, laughing.

"It wasn't well," answered Morrison, tossing off his wine, and putting the glass down with a deep sigh; "for the cursed *blue* pigeon flew away immediately."

"Why, Morrison, you must have a chicken heart to be

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frightened at a blue pigeon!" said Corbett, laughing, and looking out of the window; "at all events, he has come back again, and there he is sitting by the white one."

"It's the first time that ever I was called chicken-hearted," replied Morrison in wrath.

"Nor do you deserve it, Morrison," replied Pickersgill; "but Corbett is only joking."

"Well, at all events, I'll try my luck in the same way, and see whether I am to be in jail: I shall take the blue pigeon as my bad omen, as you did."

The sailors and Captain Pickersgill all rose and went to the window, to ascertain Corbett's fortune by this new species of augury. The blue pigeon flapped his wings, and then he sidled up to the white one; at last, the white pigeon flew off the wall and settled on the roof of the adjacent house. "Bravo, white pigeon!" said Corbett; "I shall be here again in a week." The whole party, laughing, then resumed their seats; and Morrison's countenance brightened up. As he took the glass of wine poured out by Pickersgill, he said, "Here's your health, Corbett; it was all nonsense, after all—for, d'ye see, I can't be put in jail without you are. We all sail in the same boat, and when you leave me you take with you everything that can condemn the vessel—so here's success to our trip."

"We will all drink that toast, my lads, and then on board," said the captain; "here's success to our trip."

The captain rose, as did the mates and men, drank the toast, turned down the drinking vessels on the table, hastened to the wharf, and in half-an-hour the *Happy-go-lucky* was clear of the port of St. Maloes.

## PORTLAND BILL

### CHAPTER IV

#### PORTLAND BILL

THE *Happy-go-lucky* sailed with a fresh breeze and a flowing sheet from St. Maloes the evening before the *Arrow* sailed from Barn Pool. The *Active* sailed from Portsmouth the morning after.

The yacht, as we before observed, was bound to Cowes, in the Isle of Wight. The *Active* had orders to cruise wherever she pleased within the limits of the admiral's station; and she ran for West Bay, on the other side of the Bill of Portland. The *Happy-go-lucky* was also bound for that bay to land her cargo.

The wind was light, and there was every appearance of fine weather, when the *Happy-go-lucky*, at ten o'clock on the Tuesday night, made the Portland lights; as it was impossible to run her cargo that night, she hove-to.

At eleven o'clock the Portland lights were made by the revenue cutter *Active*. Mr. Appleboy went up to have a look at them, ordered the cutter to be hove-to, and then went down to finish his allowance of gin-toddy. At twelve o'clock the yacht *Arrow* made the Portland lights, and continued her course, hardly stemming the ebb tide.

Day broke, and the horizon was clear. The first on the look-out were, of course, the smugglers; they, and those on board the revenue cutter, were the only two interested parties—the yacht was neuter.

"There are two cutters in sight, sir," said Corbett, who had the watch; for Pickersgill, having been up the whole night, had thrown himself down on the bed with his clothes on.

"What do they look like?" said Pickersgill, who was up in a moment.

"One is a yacht, and the other may be; but I rather think, as far as I can judge in the grey, that it is our old friend off here."



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"What ! old Appleboy ?"

"Yes, it looks like him ; but the day has scarcely broke yet."

"Well, he can do nothing in a light wind like this ; and before the wind we can show him our heels ; but are you sure the other is a yacht ?" said Pickersgill, coming on deck.

"Yes ; the king is more careful of his canvas."

"You're right," said Pickersgill, "that is a yacht ; and you're right there again in your guess—that is the stupid old *Active* which creeps about creeping for tubs. Well, I see nothing to alarm us at present, provided it don't fall a dead calm, and then we must take to our boat as soon as he takes to his, we are four miles from him at least. Watch his motions, Corbett, and see if he lowers a boat. What does she go now ? Four knots ?—that will soon tire their men."

The positions of the three cutters were as follows :—

The *Happy-go-lucky* was about four miles off Portland Head, and well into West Bay. The revenue cutter was close to the Head. The yacht was outside of the smuggler, about two miles to the westward, and about five or six miles from the revenue cutter.

"Two vessels in sight, sir," said Mr. Smith, coming down into the cabin to Mr. Appleboy.

"Very well," replied the lieutenant, who was *lying* down in his *standing* bed-place.

"The people say one is the *Happy-go-lucky*, sir," drawled Smith.

"Heh ? what ! *Happy-go-lucky* ? Yes, I recollect ; I've boarded her twenty times—always empty. How's she standing ?"

"She stands to the westward now, sir ; but she was hove-to, they say, when they first saw her."

"Then she has a cargo in her ;" and Mr. Appleboy shaved himself, dressed, and went on deck.

"Yes," said the lieutenant, rubbing his eyes again and again, and then looking through the glass, "it is her, sure enough. Let draw the foresheet—hands make sail. What vessel's the other ?"

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"Don't know, sir,—she's a cutter."

"A cutter? yes; maybe a yacht, or maybe the new cutter ordered on the station. Make all sail, Mr. Tomkins; hoist our pendant, and fire a gun—they will understand what we mean then; they don't know the *Happy-go-lucky* as well as we do."

In a few minutes the *Active* was under a press of sail; she hoisted her pendant, and fired a gun. The smuggler perceived that the *Active* had recognised her, and she also threw out more canvas, and ran off more to the westward.

"There's a gun, sir," reported one of the men to Mr. Stewart, on board of the yacht.

"Yes; give me the glass—a revenue cutter; then this vessel in shore running towards us must be a smuggler."

"She has just now made all sail, sir."

"Yes, there's no doubt of it. I will go down to his lordship; keep her as she goes."

Mr. Stewart then went down to inform Lord B. of the circumstance. Not only Lord B. but most of the gentlemen came on deck; as did soon afterwards the ladies, who had received the intelligence from Lord B., who spoke to them through the door of the cabin.

But the smuggler had more wind than the revenue cutter, and increased her distance.

"If we were to wear round, my lord," observed Mr. Stewart, "she is just abreast of us and in shore, we could prevent her escape."

"Round with her, Mr. Stewart," said Lord B.; "we must do our duty and protect the laws."

"That will not be fair, papa," said Cecilia Ossulton; "we have no quarrel with the smugglers: I'm sure the ladies have not, for they bring us beautiful things."

"Miss Ossulton," observed her aunt, "it is not proper for you to offer an opinion."

The yacht wore round, and, sailing so fast, the smuggler had little chance of escaping her; but to chase is one thing—to capture another.

## THE THREE CUTTERS

"Let us give her a gun," said Lord B., "that will frighten her; and he dare not cross our hawse."

The gun was loaded, and not being more than a mile from the smuggler, actually threw the ball almost a quarter of the way.

The gentlemen, as well as Lord B., were equally excited by the ardour of pursuit; but the wind died away, and at last it was nearly calm. The revenue cutter's boats were out, and coming up fast.

"Let us get our boat out, Stewart," said his lordship, "and help them; it is quite calm now."

The boat was soon out: it was a very large one, usually stowed on, and occupied a large portion of, the deck. It pulled six oars; and when it was manned, Mr. Stewart jumped in, and Lord B. followed him.

"But you have no arms," said Mr. Hautaine.

"The smugglers never resist now," observed Stewart.

"Then you are going on a very gallant expedition indeed," observed Cecilia Ossulton; "I wish you joy."

But Lord B. was too much excited to pay attention. They shoved off, and pulled towards the smuggler.

At this time the revenue boats were about five miles astern of the *Happy-go-lucky*, and the yacht about three-quarters of a mile from her in the offing. Pickersgill had, of course, observed the motions of the yacht; had seen her wear on chase, hoist her ensign and pendant, and fire her gun.

"Well," said he, "this is the blackest ingratitude: to be attacked by the very people whom we smuggle for! I only wish she may come up with us; and, let her attempt to interfere, she shall rue the day. I don't much like this, though."

As we before observed, it fell nearly calm, and the revenue boats were in chase. Pickersgill watched them as they came up.

"What shall we do?" said Corbett, "get the boat out?"

"Yes," replied Pickersgill, "we will get the boat out, and have the goods in her all ready; but we can pull faster than they do, in the first place; and, in the next, they will be pretty well tired before they come up to us. We are fresh,



“ ‘Then you are going on a very gallant expedition indeed,’  
observed Cecilia Ossulton.”



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and shall soon walk away from them ; so I shall not leave the vessel till they are within half a mile. We must sink the ankers, that they may not seize the vessel, for it is not worth while taking them with us. Pass them along, ready to run them over the bows, that they may not see us and swear to it. But we have a good half-hour and more."

"Ay, and you may hold all fast if you choose," said Morrison, "although it's better to be on the right side and get ready ; otherwise, before half-an-hour, I'll swear that we are out of their sight. Look there," said he, pointing to the eastward at a heavy bank, "it's coming right down upon us, as I said it would."

"True enough ; but still there is no saying which will come first, Morrison, the boats or the fog ; so we must be prepared."

"Hilloa ! what's this ? why, there's a boat coming from the yacht !"

Pickersgill took out his glass.

"Yes, and the yacht's own boat, with the name painted on her bows. Well, let them come—we will have no ceremony in resisting them ; they are not in the Act of Parliament, and must take the consequences. We have nought to fear. Get stretchers, my lads, and handspikes ; they row six oars, and are three in the stern sheets : they must be good men if they take us."

In a few minutes Lord B. was close to the smuggler.

"Boat ahoy ! what do you want ?"

"Surrender in the king's name."

"To what, and to whom, and what are we to surrender ? We are an English vessel coasting along shore."

"Pull on board, my lads," cried Stewart ; "I am a king's officer : we know her."

The boat darted alongside, and Stewart and Lord B., followed by the men, jumped on the deck.

"Well, gentlemen, what do you want ?" said Pickersgill.

"We seize you ! you are a smuggler,—there's no denying it : look at the casks of spirits stretched along the deck."



## THE THREE CUTTERS

"We never said that we were not smugglers," replied Pickersgill; "but what is that to you? You are not a king's ship, or employed by the revenue."

"No; but we carry a pendant, and it is our duty to protect the laws."

"And who are you?" said Pickersgill.

"I am Lord B."

"Then, my lord, allow me to say that you would do much better to attend to the framing of laws, and leave people of less consequence, like those astern of me, to execute them. 'Mind your own business' is an old adage. We shall not hurt you, my lord, as you have only employed words, but we shall put it out of your power to hurt us. Come aft, my lads. Now, my lord, resistance is useless; we are double your numbers, and you have caught a Tartar."

Lord B. and Mr. Stewart perceived that they were in an awkward predicament.

"You may do what you please," observed Mr. Stewart, "but the revenue boats are coming up, recollect."

"Look you, sir, do you see the revenue cutter?" said Pickersgill.

Stewart looked in that direction, and saw that she was hidden in the fog.

"In five minutes, sir, the boats will be out of sight also, and so will your vessel; we have nothing to fear from them."

"Indeed, my lord, we had better return," said Mr. Stewart, who perceived that Pickersgill was right.

"I beg your pardon, you will not go on board your yacht so soon as you expect. Take the oars out of the boat, my lads, two or three of you, and throw in a couple of our paddles for them to reach the shore with. The rest of you knock down the first man who offers to resist. You are not aware, perhaps, my lord, that you have attempted *piracy* on the high seas?"

Stewart looked at Lord B. It was true enough. The men of the yacht could offer no resistance; the oars were taken out of the boat and the men put in again.

## PORTLAND BILL

"My lord," said Pickersgill, "your boat is marned, do me the favour to step into it; and you, sir, do the same. I should be sorry to lay my hands upon a peer of the realm, or a king's officer even on half-pay."

Remonstrance was vain; his lordship was led to the boat by two of the smugglers, and Stewart followed.

"I will leave your oars, my lord, at the Weymouth Custom-house, and I trust this will be a lesson to you in future to 'mind your own business.'"

The boat was shoved off from the sloop by the smugglers, and was soon lost sight of in the fog, which had now covered the revenue boats as well as the yacht, at the same time it brought down a breeze from the eastward.

"Haul to the wind, Morrison," said Pickersgill, "we will stand out to get rid of the boats; if they pull on they will take it for granted that we shall run into the bay, as will the revenue cutter."

Pickersgill and Corbett were in conversation abaft for a short time, when the former desired the course to be altered two points.

"Keep silence all of you, my lads, and let me know if you hear a gun or a bell from the yacht," said Pickersgill.

"There is a gun, sir, close to us," said one of the men; "the sound was right ahead."

"That will do, keep her as she goes. Aft here, my lads; we cannot run our cargo in the bay, for the cutter has been seen to chase us, and they will all be on the look-out at the Preventive stations for us on shore. Now, my lads, I have made up my mind that, as these yacht gentlemen have thought proper to interfere, that I will take possession of the yacht for a few days. We shall then outsail everything, go where we like unsuspected, and land our cargo with ease. I shall run alongside of her—she can have but few hands on board; and mind, do not hurt anybody, but be civil and obey my orders. Morrison, you and your four men and the boy

## THE THREE CUTTERS

will remain on board as before, and take the vessel to Cherbourg, where we will join you."

In a short time another gun was fired from the yacht.

Those on board, particularly the ladies, were alarmed; the fog was very thick, and they could not distinguish the length of the vessel. They had seen the boat board, but had not seen her turned adrift without oars, as the fog came on just at that time. The yacht was left with only three seamen on board, and should it come on bad weather, they were in an awkward predicament. Mr. Hautaine had taken the command, and ordered the guns to be fired that the boat might be enabled to find them. The fourth gun was loading, when they perceived the smuggler's cutter close to them looming through the fog.

"Here they are," cried the seamen; "and they have brought the prize along with them! Three cheers for the *Arrow*!"

"Hilloa! you'll be on board of us!" cried Hautaine.

"That's exactly what I intended to be, sir," replied Pickersgill, jumping on the quarter-deck, followed by his men.

"Who the devil are you?"

"That's exactly the same question that I asked Lord B. when he boarded us," replied Pickersgill, taking off his hat to the ladies.

"Well, but what business have you here?"

"Exactly the same question which I put to Lord B.," replied Pickersgill.

"Where is Lord B., sir?" said Cecilia Ossulton, going up to the smuggler; "is he safe?"

"Yes, madam, he is safe; at least he is in his boat with all his men, and unhurt; but you must excuse me if I request you and the other ladies to go down below while I speak to these gentlemen. Be under no alarm, miss, you will receive neither insult nor ill-treatment—I have only taken possession of this vessel for the present."

"Take possession," cried Hautaine, "of a yacht?"

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"Yes, sir, since the owner of the yacht thought proper to attempt to take possession of me. I always thought that yachts were pleasure vessels, sailing about for amusement, respected themselves, and not interfering with others; but it appears that such is not the case. The owner of this yacht has thought proper to break through the neutrality and commence aggression, and under such circumstances I have now, in retaliation, taken possession of her."

"And pray what do you mean to do, sir?"

"Simply for a few days to make an exchange. I shall send you on board of my vessel as smugglers, while I remain here with the ladies and amuse myself with yachting."

"Why, sir, you cannot mean——"

"I have said, gentlemen, and that is enough; I should be sorry to resort to violence, but I must be obeyed. You have, I perceive, three seamen only left: they are not sufficient to take charge of the vessel, and Lord B. and the others you will not meet for several days. My regard for the ladies, even common humanity, points out to me that I cannot leave the vessel in this crippled condition. At the same time, I must have hands on board of my own: you will oblige me by going on board and taking her safely into port. It is the least return you can make for my kindness. In those dresses, gentlemen, you will not be able to do your duty; oblige me by shifting and putting on these." Corbett handed a flannel shirt, a rough jacket and trousers to Messrs. Hautaine, Ossulton, Vaughan, and Seagrove. After some useless resistance they were stripped, and having put on the smugglers' attire, they were handed on board of the *Happy-go-lucky*.

The three English seamen were also sent on board and confined below, as well as Ossulton's servant, who was also equipped like his master, and confined below with the seamen. Corbett and the men then handed up all the smuggled goods into the yacht, dropped the boat, and made it fast astern, and Morrison having received his directions, the vessels separated, Morrison running for Cherbourg, and

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Pickersgill steering the yacht along shore to the westward. About an hour after this exchange had been effected the fog cleared up, and showed the revenue cutter hove-to for her boats, which had pulled back and were close on board of her, and the *Happy-go-lucky* about three miles in the offing; Lord B. and his boat's crew were about four miles in-shore, paddling and drifting with the tide towards Portland. As soon as the boats were on board, the revenue cutter made all sail after the smuggler, paying no attention to the yacht, and either not seeing or not caring about the boat which was drifting about in West Bay.

## CHAPTER V

### THE TRAVESTIE

HERE we are, Corbett, and now I only wish my venture had been double," observed Pickersgill; "but I shall not allow business to absorb me wholly—we must add a little amusement. It appears to me, Corbett, that the gentleman's clothes which lie there will fit you, and those of the good-looking fellow who was spokesman will, I am sure, suit me well. Now let us dress ourselves, and then for breakfast."

Pickersgill then exchanged his clothes for those of Mr. Hautaine, and Corbett fitted on those of Mr. Ossulton. The steward was summoned up, and he dared not disobey; he appeared on deck, trembling.

"Steward, you will take these clothes below," said Pickersgill, "and, observe, that I now command this yacht; and during the time that I am on board you will pay me the same respect as you did Lord B.; nay, more, you will always address me as Lord B. You will prepare dinner and breakfast, and do your duty just as if his lordship was on board, and take care that you feed us well, for I will not allow the ladies to be entertained in a less sumptuous manner than before. You will tell the cook what I say; and now that you have

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heard me, take care that you obey ; if not, recollect that I have my own men here, and if I but point with my finger, *overboard you go*. Do you perfectly comprehend me ? ”

“ Yes,—sir,” stammered the steward.

“ Yes, *sir* !—What did I tell you, sirrah ?—Yes, my lord. Do you understand me ? ”

“ Yes—my lord.”

“ Pray, steward, whose clothes has this gentleman put on ? ”

“ Mr.—Mr. Ossulton’s, I think—sir—my lord, I mean.”

“ Very well, steward ; then recollect in future you always address that gentleman as *Mr. Ossulton*.”

“ Yes, my lord,” and the steward went down below, and was obliged to take a couple of glasses of brandy to keep himself from fainting.

“ Who are they, and what are they, Mr. Maddox ? ” cried the lady’s-maid, who had been weeping.

“ Pirates !—*bloody, murderous stick-at-nothing pirates* ! ” replied the steward.

“ Oh ! ” screamed the lady’s-maid, “ what will become of us, poor unprotected females ? ” And she hastened into the cabin, to impart this dreadful intelligence.

The ladies in the cabin were not in a very enviable situation. As for the elder Miss Ossulton (but, perhaps, it will be better in future to distinguish the two ladies, by calling the elder simply Miss Ossulton, and her niece, Cecilia), she was sitting with her salts to her nose, agonised with a mixture of trepidation and wounded pride. Mrs. Lascelles was weeping, but weeping gently. Cecilia was sad, and her heart was beating with anxiety and suspense, when the maid rushed in.

“ Oh, madam ! oh, miss ! oh, Mrs. Lascelles ! I have found it all out !—they are murderous, bloody, do-everything pirates ! ! ! ”

“ Mercy on us ! ” exclaimed Miss Ossulton ; “ surely they will never dare——”

“ Oh, ma’am, they dare anything !—they just now were for throwing the steward overboard ; and they have rummaged all the portmanteaus, and dressed themselves in the gentlemen’s



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best clothes. The captain of them told the steward that he was Lord B., and that if he dared to call him anything else, he would cut his throat from ear to ear; and if the cook don't give them a good dinner, they swear that they'll chop his right hand off, and make him eat it without pepper or salt!"

Miss Ossulton screamed, and went off into hysterics. Mrs. Lascelles and Cecilia went to her assistance; but the latter had not forgotten the very different behaviour of Jack Pickersgill, and his polite manners, when he boarded the vessel. She did not, therefore, believe what the maid had reported, but still her anxiety and suspense were great, especially about her father. After having restored her aunt she put on her bonnet, which was lying on the sofa.

"Where are you going, dear?" said Mrs. Lascelles.

"On deck," replied Cecilia. "I must and will speak to these men."

"Gracious heaven, Miss Ossulton! going on deck! have you heard what Phœbe says?"

"Yes, aunt, I have; but I can wait here no longer."

"Stop her! stop her!—she will be murdered!—she will be—she is mad!" screamed Miss Ossulton; but no one attempted to stop Cecilia, and on deck she went. On her arrival she found Jack Pickersgill and Corbett walking the deck, one of the smugglers at the helm, and the rest forward, and as quiet as the crew of the yacht. As soon as she made her appearance Jack took off his hat, and made her a bow.

"I do not know whom I have the honour of addressing, young lady; but I am flattered with this mark of confidence. You feel, and I assure you you feel correctly, that you are not exactly in lawless hands."

Cecilia looked with more surprise than fear at Pickersgill. Mr. Hautaine's dress became him; he was a handsome, fine-looking man, and had nothing of the ruffian in his appearance; unless, like Byron's Corsair, he was *half savage, half soft*. She could not help thinking that she had met many with less

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pretensions, as far as appearance went, to the claims of a gentleman, at Almack's and other fashionable circles.

"I have ventured on deck, sir," said Cecilia, with a little tremulousness in her voice, "to request, as a favour, that you will inform me what your intentions may be with regard to the vessel and with regard to the ladies!"

"And I feel much obliged to you for so doing, and I assure you I will, as far as I have made up my own mind, answer you candidly: but you tremble—allow me to conduct you to a seat. In few words, then, to remove your present alarm, I intend that the vessel shall be returned to its owner, with every article in it, as religiously respected as if they were church property. With respect to you, and the other ladies on board, I pledge you my honour that you have nothing to fear; that you shall be treated with every respect; your privacy never invaded; and that, in a few days, you will be restored to your friends. Young lady, I pledge my hopes of future salvation to the truth of this; but, at the same time, I must make a few conditions, which, however, will not be very severe."

"But, sir," replied Cecilia, much relieved, for Pickersgill had stood by her in the most respectful manner, "you are, I presume, the captain of the smuggler? Pray answer me one question more—What became of the boat with Lord B.? He is my father."

"I left him in his boat, without a hair of his head touched, young lady; but I took away the oars."

"Then he will perish!" cried Cecilia, putting her handkerchief to her eyes.

"No, young lady; he is on shore, probably, by this time. Although I took away his means of assisting to capture us, I left him the means of gaining the land. It is not every one who would have done that, after his conduct to us."

"I begged him not to go," said Cecilia; "I told him that it was not fair, and that he had no quarrel with the smugglers."

"I thank you even for that," replied Pickersgill. "And

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now, miss—I have not the pleasure of recollecting his lordship's family name——”

“Ossulton, sir,” said Cecilia, looking at Pickersgill with surprise.

“Then, with your permission, Miss Ossulton, I will now make you my confidant: excuse my using so free a term, but it is because I wish to relieve your fears. At the same time, I cannot permit you to divulge all my intentions to the whole party on board. I feel that I may trust you, for you have courage, and where there is courage there generally is truth; but you must first tell me whether you will condescend to accept these terms?”

Cecilia demurred a moment; the idea of being the confidant of a smuggler rather startled her: but still, her knowledge of what his intentions were, if she might not reveal them, might be important; as, perhaps, she might dissuade him. She could be in no worse position than she was now, and she might be in a much better. The conduct of Pickersgill had been such, up to the present, as to inspire confidence; and, although he defied the laws, he appeared to regard the courtesies of life. Cecilia was a courageous girl, and at length she replied—

“Provided what you desire me to keep secret will not be injurious to any one, or compromise me in my peculiar situation, I consent.”

“I would not hurt a fly, Miss Ossulton, but in self-defence; and I have too much respect for you, from your conduct during our short meeting, to compromise you. Allow me now to be very candid; and then, perhaps, you will acknowledge that in my situation others would do the same, and, perhaps, not show half so much forbearance. Your father, without any right whatever, interferes with me and my calling: he attempts to make me a prisoner, to have me thrown in jail, heavily fined, and, perhaps, sent out of the country. I will not enter into any defence of smuggling: it is sufficient to say that there are pains and penalties attached to the

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infraction of certain laws, and that I choose to risk them. But Lord B. was not empowered by Government to attack me; it was a gratuitous act; and had I thrown him and all his crew into the sea, I should have been justified: for it was, in short, an act of piracy on their part. Now, as your father has thought to turn a yacht into a revenue cutter, you cannot be surprised at my retaliating, in turning her into a smuggler; and as he has mixed up looking after the revenue with yachting, he cannot be surprised if I retaliate, by mixing up a little yachting with smuggling. I have dressed your male companions as smugglers, and have sent them in the smuggling vessel to Cherbourg, where they will be safely landed; and I have dressed myself, and the only person whom I could join with me in this frolic, as gentlemen, in their places. My object is two-fold: one is, to land my cargo, which I have now on board, and which is very valuable; the other is, to retaliate upon your father and his companions for their attempt upon me, by stepping into their shoes, and enjoying, for a day or two, their luxuries. It is my intention to make free with nothing but his lordship's wines and eatables—that you may be assured of; but I shall have no pleasure if the ladies do not sit down to the dinner-table with us, as they did before with your father and his friends.”

“You can hardly expect that, sir,” said Cecilia.

“Yes, I do; and that will be not only the price of the early release of the yacht and themselves, but it will also be the only means by which they will obtain anything to eat. You observe, Miss Ossulton, the sins of the fathers are visited on the children. I have now told you what I mean to do, and what I wish. I leave you to think of it, and decide whether it will not be the best for all parties to consent. You have my permission to tell the other ladies that, whatever may be their conduct, they are as secure from ill-treatment or rudeness as if they were in Grosvenor Square; but I cannot answer that they will not be hungry, if, after such

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forbearance in every point, they show so little gratitude as not to honour me with their company."

"Then I am to understand that we are to be starved into submission?"

"No, not starved, Miss Ossulton; but recollect that you will be on bread and water, and detained until you do consent, and your detention will increase the anxiety of your father."

"You know how to persuade, sir," said Cecilia. "As far as I am concerned, I trust I shall ever be ready to sacrifice any feelings of pride to spare my father so much uneasiness. With your permission, I will now go down into the cabin and relieve my companions from the worst of their fears. As for obtaining what you wish, I can only say that, as a young person, I am not likely to have much influence with those older than myself, and must inevitably be overruled, as I have not permission to point out to them reasons which might avail. Would you so far allow me to be relieved from my promise, as to communicate all you have said to me to the only married woman on board? I think I then might obtain your wishes, which, I must candidly tell you, I shall attempt to effect *only* because I am most anxious to rejoin my friends."

"And be relieved of my company," replied Pickersgill, smiling ironically—"of course you are; but I must and will have my petty revenge: and although you may, and probably will, detest me, at all events you shall not have any very formidable charge to make against me. Before you go below, Miss Ossulton, I give you my permission to add the married lady to the number of my confidants; and you must permit me to introduce my friend, Mr. Ossulton;" and Pickersgill waved his hand in the direction of Corbett, who took off his hat and made a low obeisance.

It was impossible for Cecilia Ossulton to help smiling.

"And," continued Pickersgill, "having taken the command of this yacht instead of his lordship, it is absolutely necessary that I also take his lordship's name. While on board I am Lord B.; and allow me to introduce myself under

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that name ; I cannot be addressed otherwise. Depend upon it, Miss Ossulton, that I shall have a most paternal solicitude to make you happy and comfortable."

Had Cecilia Ossulton dared to have given vent to her real feelings at that time, she would have burst into a fit of laughter ; it was too ludicrous. At the same time, the very burlesque reassured her still more. She went into the cabin with a heavy weight removed from her heart.

In the meantime, Miss Ossulton and Mrs. Lascelles remained below, in the greatest anxiety at Cecilia's prolonged stay ; they knew not what to think, and dared not go on deck. Mrs. Lascelles had once determined at all risks to go up ; but Miss Ossulton and Phæbe had screamed and implored her so fervently not to leave them, that she unwillingly consented to remain. Cecilia's countenance, when she entered the cabin, reassured Mrs. Lascelles, but not her aunt, who ran to her crying and sobbing, and clinging to her, saying, "What have they done to you, my poor, poor Cecilia?"

"Nothing at all, aunt," replied Cecilia ; "the captain speaks very fairly, and says he shall respect us in every possible way, provided that we obey his orders ; but if not——"

"If not—what, Cecilia?" said Miss Ossulton, grasping her niece's arm.

"He will starve us, and not let us go!"

"God have mercy on us!" cried Miss Ossulton, renewing her sobs.

Cecilia then went to Mrs. Lascelles, and communicated to her apart all that had passed. Mrs. Lascelles agreed with Cecilia that they were in no danger of insult ; and as they talked over the matter they at last began to laugh ; there was a novelty in it, and there was something so ridiculous in all the gentlemen being turned into smugglers. Cecilia was glad that she could not tell her aunt, as she wished her to be so frightened as never to have her company on board the yacht again ; and Mrs. Lascelles was too glad to annoy her for many and various insults received. The matter was



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therefore canvassed over very satisfactorily, and Mrs. Lascelles felt a natural curiosity to see this new Lord B. and the second Mr. Ossulton. But they had had no breakfast, and were feeling very hungry now that their alarm was over. They desired Phœbe to ask the steward for some tea or coffee. The reply was, that "Breakfast was laid in the cabin, and Lord B. trusted that the ladies would come to partake of it."

"No, no," replied Mrs. Lascelles, "I never can, without being introduced to them first."

"Nor will I go," replied Cecilia, "but I will write a note, and we will have our breakfast here." Cecilia wrote a note in pencil as follows:—

"Miss Ossulton's compliments to Lord B., and, as the ladies feel rather indisposed after the alarm of this morning, they trust that his lordship will excuse their coming to breakfast; but hope to meet his lordship at dinner, if not before that time on deck."

The answer was propitious, and the steward soon appeared with the breakfast in the ladies' cabin.

"Well, Maddox," said Cecilia, "how do you get on with your new master?"

The steward looked at the door, to see if it was closed, shook his head, and then said, with a look of despair, "He has ordered a haunch of venison for dinner, miss, and he has twice threatened to toss me overboard."

"You must obey him, Maddox, or he certainly will. These pirates are dreadful fellows. Be attentive, and serve him just as if he was my father."

"Yes, yes, ma'am, I will; but our time may come. It's *burglary* on the high seas, and I'll go fifty miles to see him hanged."

"Steward!" cried Pickersgill, from the cabin.

"O Lord! he can't have heard me—d'ye think he did, miss?"

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"The partitions are very thin, and you spoke very loud," said Mrs. Lascelles; "at all events, go to him quickly."

"Good-bye, miss; good-bye, ma'am, if I shouldn't see you any more," said Maddox, trembling with fear, as he obeyed the awful summons—which was to demand a toothpick.

Miss Ossulton would not touch the breakfast; not so Mrs. Lascelles and Cecilia, who ate very heartily.

"It's very dull to be shut up in this cabin," said Mrs. Lascelles; "come, Cecilia, let's go on deck."

"And leave me!" cried Miss Ossulton.

"There is Phœbe here, aunt; we are going up to persuade the pirates to put us all on shore."

Mrs. Lascelles and Cecilia put on their bonnets and went up. Lord B. took off his hat, and begged the honour of being introduced to the pretty widow. He handed the ladies to a seat, and then commenced conversing upon various subjects, which at the same time possessed great novelty. His lordship talked about France, and described its ports; told now and then a good anecdote; pointed out the different headlands, bays, towns, and villages, which they were passing rapidly, and always had some little story connected with each. Before the ladies had been two hours on deck they found themselves, to their infinite surprise, not only interested, but in conversation with the captain of the smuggler, and more than once they laughed outright. But the *soi-disant* Lord B. had inspired them with confidence; they fully believed that what he had told them was true, and that he had taken possession of the yacht to smuggle his goods, to be revenged, and to have a laugh. Now none of these three offences are capital in the eyes of the fair sex, and Jack was a handsome, fine-looking fellow, of excellent manners and very agreeable conversation; at the same time, neither he nor his friend were in their general deportment and behaviour otherwise than most respectful.

"Ladies, as you are not afraid of me, which is a greater happiness than I had reason to expect, I think you may be

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amused to witness the fear of those who accuse your sex of cowardice. With your permission, I will send for the cook and steward, and inquire about the dinner."

"I should like to know what there is for dinner," observed Mrs. Lascelles demurely; "wouldn't you, Cecilia?"

Cecilia put her handkerchief to her mouth.

"Tell the steward and the cook both to come aft immediately," cried Pickersgill.

In a few seconds they both made their appearance.

"Steward!" cried Pickersgill, with a loud voice.

"Yes, my lord," replied Maddox, with his hat in his hand.

"What wines have you put out for dinner?"

"Champagne, my lord; and claret, my lord; and Madeira and sherry, my lord."

"No Burgundy, sir?"

"No, my lord; there is no Burgundy on board."

"No Burgundy, sir! do you dare to tell me that?"

"Upon my soul, my lord," cried Maddox, dropping on his knees, "there is no Burgundy on board—ask the ladies."

"Very well, sir, you may go."

"Cook, what have you got for dinner?"

"Sir, a haunch of mutt—of venison, my lord," replied the cook, with his white nightcap in his hand.

"What else, sirrah?"

"A boiled calf's head, my lord."

"A boiled calf's head! Let it be roasted, or I'll roast you, sir!" cried Pickersgill, in an angry tone.

"Yes, my lord; I'll roast it."

"And what else, sir?"

"Maintenon cutlets, my lord."

"Maintenon cutlets! I hate them—I won't have them, sir. Let them be dressed à l'ombre Chinoise."

"I don't know what that is, my lord."

"I don't care for that, sirrah; if you don't find out by dinner-time, you're food for fishes—that's all; you may go."

The cook walked off wringing his hands and his nightcap

## THE SMUGGLING YACHT

as well—for he still held it in his right hand—and disappeared down the fore-hatchway.

“I have done this to pay you a deserved compliment, ladies; you have more courage than the other sex.”

“Recollect that we have had confidence given to us in consequence of your pledging your word, my lord.”

“You do me, then, the honour of believing me?”

“I did not until I saw you,” replied Mrs. Lascelles; “but now I am convinced that you will perform your promise.”

“You do indeed encourage me, madam, to pursue what is right,” said Pickersgill, bowing; “for your approbation I should be most sorry to lose, still more sorry to prove myself unworthy of it.”

As the reader will observe, everything was going on remarkably well.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE SMUGGLING YACHT

CECILIA returned to the cabin, to ascertain whether her aunt was more composed; but Mrs. Lascelles remained on deck. She was much pleased with Pickersgill; and they continued their conversation. Pickersgill entered into a defence of his conduct to Lord B.; and Mrs. Lascelles could not but admit the provocation. After a long conversation she hinted at his profession, and how superior he appeared to be to such a lawless life.

“You may be incredulous, madam,” replied Pickersgill, “if I tell you that I have as good a right to quarter my arms as Lord B. himself; and that I am not under my real name. Smuggling is, at all events, no crime; and I infinitely prefer the wild life I lead at the head of my men to being spurned by society because I am poor. The greatest crime in this country is poverty. I may, if I am fortunate, some day resume my name. You may, perhaps, meet me, and if you please, you may expose me.”

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"That I should not be likely to do," replied the widow ; "but still I regret to see a person, evidently intended for better things, employed in so disreputable a profession."

"I hardly know, madam, what is and what is not disreputable in this conventional world. It is not considered disreputable to cringe to the vices of a court, or to accept a pension wrung from the industry of the nation, in return for base servility. It is not considered disreputable to take tithes, intended for the service of God, and lavish them away at watering-places or elsewhere, seeking pleasure instead of doing God service. It is not considered disreputable to take fee after fee to uphold injustice, to plead against innocence, to pervert truth, and to aid the devil. It is not considered disreputable to gamble on the Stock Exchange, or to corrupt the honesty of electors by bribes, for doing which the penalty attached is equal to that decreed to the offence of which I am guilty. All these, and much more, are not considered disreputable ; yet by all these are the moral bonds of society loosened, while in mine we cause no guilt in others——"

"But still it is a crime."

"A violation of the revenue laws, and no more. Observe, madam, the English Government encourage the smuggling of our manufactures to the Continent, at the same time that they take every step to prevent articles being smuggled into this country. Now, madam, can that be a *crime* when the head of the vessel is turned north, which becomes *no crime* when she steers the opposite way ?"

"There is a stigma attached to it, you must allow."

"That I grant you, madam ; and as soon as I can quit the profession I shall. No captive ever sighed more to be released from his chains ; but I will not leave it, till I find that I am in a situation not to be spurned and neglected by those with whom I have a right to associate."

At this moment the steward was seen forward making signs to Mrs. Lascelles, who excused herself, and went to him.

"For the love of God, madam," said Maddox, "as he

## THE SMUGGLING YACHT

appears to be friendly with you, do pray find out how these cutlets are to be dressed ; the cook is tearing his hair, and we shall never have any dinner ; and then it will all fall upon me, and I—shall be tossed overboard.”

Mrs. Lascelles desired poor Maddox to wait there while she obtained the desired information. In a few minutes she returned to him.

“ I have found it out. They are first to be boiled in vinegar, then fried in batter, and served up with a sauce of anchovy and Malaga raisins ! ”

“ First fried in vinegar, then boiled in batter, and served up with almonds and raisins ! ”

“ No—no ! ” Mrs. Lascelles repeated the injunction to the frightened steward, and then returned aft, and re-entered into a conversation with Pickersgill, in which for the first time Corbett now joined. Corbett had sense enough to feel, that the less he came forward until his superior had established himself in the good graces of the ladies, the more favourable would be the result.

In the meantime Cecilia had gone down to her aunt, who still continued to wail and lament. The young lady tried all she could to console her, and to persuade her that if they were civil and obedient they had nothing to fear.

“ Civil and obedient, indeed ! ” cried Miss Ossulton, “ to a fellow who is a smuggler and a pirate ! I, the sister of Lord B. ! Never ! The presumption of the wretch ! ”

“ That is all very well, aunt ; but recollect, we must submit to circumstances. These men insist upon our dining with them ; and we must go, or we shall have no dinner.”

“ I sit down with a pirate ! Never ! I’ll have no dinner—I’ll starve—I’ll die ! ”

“ But, my dear aunt, it’s the only chance we have of obtaining our release ; and if you do not do it Mrs. Lascelles will think that you wish to remain with them.”

“ Mrs. Lascelles judges of other people by herself.”

“ The captain is certainly a very well-behaved, hand-



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some man. He looks like a nobleman in disguise. What an odd thing it would be, aunt, if this should be all a hoax!"

"A hoax, child?" replied Miss Ossulton, sitting up on the sofa.

Cecilia found that she had hit the right nail, as the saying is; and she brought forward so many arguments to prove that she thought it was a hoax to frighten them, and that the gentleman above was a man of consequence, that her aunt began to listen to reason, and at last consented to join the dinner-party. Mrs. Lascelles now came down below; and when dinner was announced they repaired to the large cabin, where they found Pickersgill and Corbett waiting for them.

Miss Ossulton did not venture to look up, until she heard Pickersgill say to Mrs. Lascelles, "Perhaps, madam, you will do me the favour to introduce me to that lady, whom I have not had the honour of seeing before?"

"Certainly, my lord," replied Mrs. Lascelles. "Miss Ossulton, the aunt of this young lady."

Mrs. Lascelles purposely did not introduce *his lordship* in return, that she might mystify the old spinster.

"I feel highly honoured in finding myself in the company of Miss Ossulton," said Pickersgill. "Ladies, we wait but for you to sit down. Ossulton, take the head of the table and serve the soup."

Miss Ossulton was astonished; she looked at the smugglers, and perceived two well-dressed gentlemanly men, one of whom was apparently a lord, and the other having the same family name.

"It must be all a hoax," thought she, and she very quietly took to her soup.

The dinner passed off very pleasantly; Pickersgill was agreeable, Corbett funny, and Miss Ossulton so far recovered herself as to drink wine with *his lordship*, and to ask Corbett what branch of their family he belonged to.

"I presume it's the Irish branch?" said Mrs. Lascelles, prompting him.

## THE SMUGGLING YACHT

"Exactly, madam," replied Corbett.

"Have you ever been to Torquay, ladies?" inquired Pickersgill.

"No, my lord," answered Mrs. Lascelles.

"We shall anchor there in the course of an hour, and probably remain there till to-morrow. Steward, bring coffee. Tell the cook these cutlets were remarkably well dressed."

The ladies retired to their cabin. Miss Ossulton was now convinced that it was all a hoax; "but," said she, "I shall tell Lord B. my opinion of their practical jokes when he returns. What is his lordship's name who is on board?"

"He won't tell us," replied Mrs. Lascelles; "but I think I know; it is Lord Blarney."

"Lord Blaney, you mean, I presume," said Miss Ossulton; "however, the thing is carried too far. Cecilia, we will go on shore at Torquay, and wait till the yacht returns with Lord B. I don't like these jokes; they may do very well for widows, and people of no rank."

Now Mrs. Lascelles was sorry to find Miss Ossulton so much at her ease. She owed her no little spite, and wished for revenge. Ladies will go very far to obtain this. How far Mrs. Lascelles would have gone, I will not pretend to say; but this is certain, that the last innuendo of Miss Ossulton very much added to her determination. She took her bonnet and went on deck, at once told Pickersgill that he could not please her or Cecilia more than by frightening Miss Ossulton, who, under the idea that it was all a hoax, had quite recovered her spirits; talked of her pride and ill-nature, and wished her to receive a useful lesson. Thus, to follow up her revenge, did Mrs. Lascelles commit herself so far as to be confidential with the smuggler in return.

"Mrs. Lascelles, I shall be able to obey you, and, at the same time, to combine business with pleasure."

After a short conversation, the yacht dropped her anchor at Torquay. It was then about two hours before sunset. As soon as the sails were furled, one or two gentlemen,

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who resided there, came on board to pay their respects to Lord B. ; and, as Pickersgill had found out from Cecilia that her father was acquainted with no one there, he received them in person ; asked them down into the cabin—called for wine—and desired them to send their boat away, as his own was going on shore. The smugglers took great care that the steward, cook, and lady's-maid should have no communication with the guests ; one of them, by Corbett's direction, being a sentinel over each individual. The gentlemen remained about half-an-hour on board, during which Corbett and the smugglers had filled the portmanteaus found in the cabin with the lace, and they were put in the boat ; Corbett then landed the gentlemen in the same boat, and went up to the hotel, the smugglers following him with the portmanteaus, without any suspicion or interruption. As soon as he was there, he ordered post-horses, and set off for a town close by, where he had correspondents ; and thus the major part of the cargo was secured. Corbett then returned in the night, bringing with him people to receive the goods ; and the smugglers landed the silks, teas, &c., with the same good fortune. Everything was out of the yacht except a portion of the lace, which the portmanteaus would not hold. Pickersgill might easily have sent this on shore ; but, to please Mrs. Lascelles, he arranged otherwise.

The next morning, about an hour after breakfast was finished, Mrs. Lascelles entered the cabin pretending to be in the greatest consternation, and fell on the sofa as if she were going to faint.

"Good heavens ! what is the matter ?" exclaimed Cecilia, who knew very well what was coming.

"Oh, the wretch ! he has made such proposals !"

"Proposals ! what proposals ? what ! Lord Blaney ?" cried Miss Ossulton.

"Oh, he's no lord ! he's a villain and a smuggler ! and he insists that we shall both fill our pockets full of lace, and go on shore with him."

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"Mercy on me ! Then it is no hoax after all ; and I've been sitting down to dinner with a smuggler !"

"Sitting down, madam !—if it were to be no more than that—but we are to take his arm up to the hotel. Oh, dear ! Cecilia, I am ordered on deck ; pray come with me !"

Miss Ossulton rolled on the sofa, and rang for Phœbe ; she was in a state of great alarm.

A knock at the door.

"Come in," said Miss Ossulton, thinking it was Phœbe ; when Pickersgill made his appearance.

"What do you want, sir ? Go out, sir ! go out directly, or I'll scream !"

"It is no use screaming, madam ; recollect, that all on board are at my service. You will oblige me by listening to me, Miss Ossulton. I am, as you know, a smuggler ; and I must send this lace on shore. You will oblige me by putting it into your pockets, or about your person, and prepare to go on shore with me. As soon as we arrive at the hotel, you will deliver it to me, and I then shall reconduct you on board of the yacht. You are not the first lady who has gone on shore with contraband articles about her person."

"Me, sir ! go on shore in that way ? No, sir—never ! What will the world say ?—the Hon. Miss Ossulton walking with a smuggler ! No, sir—never !"

"Yes, madam ; walking arm-in-arm with a smuggler. I shall have you on one arm, and Mrs. Lascelles on the other ; and I would advise you to take it very quietly ; for, in the first place, it will be you who smuggle, as the goods will be found on your person, and you will certainly be put in prison ; for at the least appearance of insubordination, we run and inform against you ; and further, your niece will remain on board as a hostage for your good behaviour—and if you have any regard for her liberty, you will consent immediately."

Pickersgill left the cabin, and shortly afterwards Cecilia and Mrs. Lascelles entered, apparently much distressed. They had been informed of all, and Mrs. Lascelles declared,

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that for her part, sooner than leave her poor Cecilia to the mercy of such people, she had made up her mind to submit to the smuggler's demands. Cecilia also begged so earnestly, that Miss Ossulton, who had no idea that it was a trick, with much sobbing and blubbering, consented.

When all was ready Cecilia left the cabin; Pickersgill came down, handed up the two ladies, who had not exchanged a word with each other during Cecilia's absence; the boat was ready alongside—they went in, and pulled on shore. Everything succeeded to the smuggler's satisfaction. Miss Ossulton, frightened out of her wits, took his arm; and, with Mrs. Lascelles on the other, they went up to the hotel, followed by four of his boat's crew. As soon as they were shown into a room, Corbett, who was already on shore, asked for Lord B., and joined them. The ladies retired to another apartment, divested themselves of their contraband goods, and after calling for some sandwiches and wine, Pickersgill waited an hour, and then returned on board. Mrs. Lascelles was triumphant; and she rewarded her new ally—the smuggler—with one of her sweetest smiles. Community of interest will sometimes make strange friendships.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

WE must now return to the other parties who have assisted in the acts of this little drama. Lord B., after paddling and paddling, the men relieving each other, in order to make head against the wind, which was off shore, arrived about midnight at a small town in West Bay, from whence he took a chaise on to Portsmouth, taking it for granted that his yacht would arrive as soon as, if not before himself, little imagining that it was in possession of the smugglers. There he remained three or four days, when, becoming impatient,

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he applied to one of his friends who had a yacht at Cowes, and sailed with him to look after his own.

We left the *Happy-go-lucky* chased by the revenue cutter. At first the smuggler had the advantage before the wind; but, by degrees, the wind went round with the sun, and brought the revenue cutter to leeward: it was then a chase on a wind, and the revenue cutter came fast up with her.

Morrison, perceiving that he had no chance of escape, let run the ankers of brandy that he might not be condemned; but still he was in an awkward situation, as he had more men on board than allowed by Act of Parliament. He therefore stood on, notwithstanding the shot of the cutter went over and over him, hoping that a fog or night might enable him to escape; but he had no such good fortune; one of the shot carried away the head of his mast, and the *Happy-go-lucky's* luck was all over. He was boarded and taken possession of; he asserted that the extra men were only passengers; but, in the first place, they were dressed in seamen's clothes; and, in the second, as soon as the boat was aboard of her, Appleboy had gone down to his gin-toddy, and was not to be disturbed. The gentlemen smugglers therefore passed an uncomfortable night; and the cutter going to Portland by daylight, before Appleboy was out of bed, they were taken on shore to the magistrate. Hautaine explained the whole affair, and they were immediately released and treated with respect; but they were not permitted to depart until they were bound over to appear against the smugglers, and prove the brandy having been on board. They then set off for Portsmouth in the seamen's clothes, having had quite enough of yachting for that season, Mr. Ossulton declaring that he only wanted to get his luggage, and then he would take care how he put himself again in the way of the shot of a revenue cruiser, or of sleeping a night on her decks.

In the meantime Morrison and his men were locked up in the jail, the old man, as the key was turned on him, exclaiming, as he raised his foot in vexation, "That cursed blue pigeon."



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We will now return to the yacht.

About an hour after Pickersgill had come on board, Corbett had made all his arrangements and followed him. It was not advisable to remain at Torquay any longer, through fear of discovery; he therefore weighed the anchor before dinner, and made sail.

"What do you intend to do now, my lord?" said Mrs. Lascelles.

"I intend to run down to Cowes, anchor the yacht in the night, and an hour before daylight have you in my boat with all my men. I will take care that you are in perfect safety, depend upon it, even if I run a risk. I should, indeed, be miserable, if, through my wild freaks, any accident should happen to Mrs. Lascelles or Miss Ossulton."

"I am very anxious about my father," observed Cecilia. "I trust that you will keep your promise."

"I always have hitherto, Miss Ossulton; have I not?"

"Ours is but a short and strange acquaintance."

"I grant it; but it will serve for you to talk about long after. I shall disappear as suddenly as I have come—you will neither of you, in all probability, ever see me again."

The dinner was announced, and they sat down to table as before; but the elderly spinster refused to make her appearance, and Mrs. Lascelles and Cecilia, who thought she had been frightened enough, did not attempt to force her. Pickersgill immediately yielded to these remonstrances, and from that time she remained undisturbed in the ladies' cabin, meditating over the indignity of having sat down to table, having drunk wine, and been obliged to walk on shore, taking the arm of a smuggler, and appear in such a humiliating situation.

The wind was light, and they made but little progress, and were not abreast of Portland till the second day, when another yacht appeared in sight, and the two vessels slowly neared, until in the afternoon they were within four miles of each other. It then fell a dead calm: signals were thrown out by the other yacht, but could not be distinguished, and,

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for the last time, they sat down to dinner. Three days' companionship on board of a vessel, cooped up together, and having no one else to converse with, will produce intimacy; and Pickersgill was a young man of so much originality and information, that he was listened to with pleasure. He never attempted to advance beyond the line of strict decorum and politeness; and his companion was equally unpresuming. Situated as they were, and feeling what must have been the case had they fallen into other hands, both Cecilia and Mrs. Lascelles felt some degree of gratitude towards him; and, although anxious to be relieved from so strange a position, they had gradually acquired a perfect confidence in him; and this had produced a degree of familiarity on their parts, although never ventured upon by the smuggler. As Corbett was at the table, one of the men came down and made a sign. Corbett shortly after quitted the table and went on deck. "I wish, my lord, you would come up a moment, and see if you can make this flag out," said Corbett, giving a significant nod to Pickersgill. "Excuse me, ladies, one moment," said Pickersgill, who went on deck.

"It is the boat of the yacht coming on board," said Corbett; "and Lord B. is in the stern-sheets with the gentleman who was with him."

"And how many men in the boat?—let me see—only four. Well, let his lordship and his friend come: when they are on the deck, have the men ready in case of accident; but if you can manage to tell the boat's crew that they are to go on board again, and get rid of them that way, so much the better. Arrange this with Adams, and then come down again—his lordship must see us all at dinner."

Pickersgill then descended, and Corbett had hardly time to give his directions and to resume his seat, before his lordship and Mr. Stewart pulled up alongside and jumped on deck. There was no one to receive them but the seamen, and those whom they did not know. They looked round in amazement; at last his lordship said to Adams, who stood forward—

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"What men are you?"

"Belong to the yacht, ye'r honour."

Lord B. heard laughing in the cabin; he would not wait to interrogate the men; he walked aft, followed by Mr. Stewart, looked down the skylight, and perceived his daughter and Mrs. Lascelles, with, as he supposed, Hautaine and Ossulton.

Pickersgill had heard the boat rub the side, and the sound of the feet on deck, and he talked the more loudly, that the ladies might be caught by Lord B. as they were. He heard their feet at the skylight, and knew that they could hear what passed; and at that moment he proposed to the ladies that as this was their last meeting at table they should all take a glass of champagne to drink to "their happy meeting with Lord B." This was a toast which they did not refuse. Maddox poured out the wine, and they were all bowing to each other, when his lordship, who had come down the ladder, walked into the cabin, followed by Mr. Stewart. Cecilia perceived her father; the champagne-glass dropped from her hand—she flew into his arms, and burst into tears.

"Who would not be a father, Mrs. Lascelles?" said Pickersgill, quietly seating himself, after having first risen to receive Lord B.

"And pray, whom may I have the honour of finding established here?" said Lord B., in an angry tone, speaking over his daughter's head, who still lay in his arms. "By heavens, yes!—Stewart, it is the smuggling captain dressed out."

"Even so, my lord," replied Pickersgill. "You abandoned your yacht to capture me; you left these ladies in a vessel crippled for want of men; they might have been lost. I have returned good for evil by coming on board with my own people, and taking charge of them. This night I expected to have anchored your vessel in Cowes, and have left them in safety."

"By the——" cried Stewart.

"Stop, sir, if you please!" cried Pickersgill; "recollect you have once already attacked one who never offended."

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Oblige me by refraining from intemperate language ; for I tell you I will not put up with it. Recollect, sir, that I have refrained from that, and also from taking advantage of you when you were in my power. Recollect, sir, also, that the yacht is still in possession of the smugglers, and that you are in no condition to insult with impunity. My lord, allow me to observe, that we men are too hot of temperament to argue or listen coolly. With your permission, your friend, and my friend, and I, will repair on deck, leaving you to hear from your daughter and that lady all that has passed. After that, my lord, I shall be most happy to hear anything which your lordship may please to say."

"Upon my word——" commenced Mr. Stewart.

"Mr. Stewart," interrupted Cecilia Ossulton, "I request your silence ; nay, more, if ever we are again to sail in the same vessel together, I *insist* upon it."

"Your lordship will oblige me by enforcing Miss Ossulton's request," said Mrs. Lascelles.

Mr. Stewart was dumbfounded—no wonder—to find the ladies siding with the smuggler.

"I am obliged to you, ladies, for your interference," said Pickersgill ; "for, although I have the means of enforcing conditions, I should be sorry to avail myself of them. I wait for his lordship's reply."

Lord B. was very much surprised. He wished for an explanation ; he bowed with *hauteur*. Everybody appeared to be in a false position ; even he, Lord B., somehow or another had bowed to a smuggler.

Pickersgill and Stewart went on deck, walking up and down, crossing each other without speaking, but reminding you of two dogs who are both anxious to fight, but have been restrained by the voice of their masters. Corbett followed, and talked in a low tone to Pickersgill ; Stewart went over to leeward to see if the boat was still alongside, but it had long before returned to the yacht. Miss Ossulton had heard her brother's voice, but did not come out of the

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after-cabin; she wished to be magnificent, and at the same time she was not sure whether all was right, Phœbe having informed her that there was nobody with her brother and Mr. Stewart, and that the smugglers still had the command of the vessel. After a while, Pickersgill and Corbett went down forward, and returned dressed in the smuggler's clothes, when they resumed their walk on the deck.

In the meantime it was dark; the cutter flew along the coast, and the Needles' lights were on the larboard bow. The conversation between Mrs. Lascelles, Cecilia, and her father was long. When all had been detailed, and the conduct of Pickersgill duly represented, Lord B. acknowledged that, by attacking the smuggler, he had laid himself open to retaliation; that Pickersgill had shown a great deal of forbearance in every instance; and after all, had he not gone on board the yacht, she might have been lost, with only three seamen on board. He was amused with the smuggling and the fright of his sister, still more with the gentlemen being sent to Cherbourg, and much consoled that he was not the only one to be laughed at. He was also much pleased with Pickersgill's intention of leaving the yacht safe in Cowes harbour, his respect to the property on board, and his conduct to the ladies. On the whole, he felt grateful to Pickersgill, and where there is gratitude there is always goodwill.

"But who can he be?" said Mrs. Lascelles; "his name he acknowledges not to be Pickersgill, and he told me confidentially that he was of good family."

"Confidentially, my dear Mrs. Lascelles?" said Lord B.

"Oh, yes! we are both his confidants. Are we not, Cecilia?"

"Upon my honour, Mrs. Lascelles, this smuggler appears to have made an impression which many have attempted in vain."

Mrs. Lascelles did not reply to that remark, but said, "Now, my lord, you must decide—and I trust you will, to oblige us, treat him as he has treated us, with the greatest respect and kindness."

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"Why should you suppose otherwise?" replied Lord B.; "it is not only my wish but my interest so to do. He may take us over to France to-night, or anywhere else. Has he not possession of the vessel?"

"Yes," replied Cecilia; "but we flatter ourselves that we have *the command*. Shall we call him down, papa?"

"Ring for Maddox. Maddox, tell Mr. Pickersgill, who is on deck, that I wish to speak with him, and shall be obliged by his stepping down into the cabin."

"Who, my lord? What? *Him*?"

"Yes, *him*," replied Cecilia, laughing.

"Must I call him my lord, now, miss?"

"You may do as you please, Maddox; but recollect he is still in possession of the vessel," replied Cecilia.

"Then, with your lordship's permission, I will; it's the safest way."

The smuggler entered the cabin; the ladies started as he appeared in his rough costume. With his throat open, and his loose black handkerchief, he was the *beau ideal* of a handsome sailor.

"Your lordship wishes to communicate with me?"

"Mr. Pickersgill, I feel that you have had cause of enmity against me, and that you have behaved with forbearance. I thank you for your considerate treatment of the ladies; and I assure you, that I feel no resentment for what has passed."

"My lord, I am quite satisfied with what you have said; and I only hope that, in future, you will not interfere with a poor smuggler, who may be striving, by a life of danger and privation, to procure subsistence for himself, and, perhaps, his family. I stated to these ladies my intention of anchoring the yacht this night at Cowes, and leaving her as soon as she was in safety. Your unexpected presence will only make this difference, which is, that I must previously obtain your lordship's assurance that those with you will allow me and my men to quit her without molestation, after we have performed this service."



## THE THREE CUTTERS

"I pledge you my word, Mr. Pickersgill, and I thank you into the bargain. I trust you will allow me to offer some remuneration."

"Most certainly not, my lord."

"At all events, Mr. Pickersgill, if, at any other time, I can be of service, you may command me."

Pickersgill made no reply.

"Surely, Mr. Pickersgill——"

"Pickersgill! how I hate that name!" said the smuggler, musing. "I beg your lordship's pardon—if I may require your assistance for any of my unfortunate companions——"

"Not for yourself, Mr. Pickersgill?" said Mrs. Lascelles.

"Madam, I smuggle no more."

"For the pleasure I feel in hearing that resolution, Mr. Pickersgill," said Cecilia, "take my hand and thanks."

"And mine," said Mrs. Lascelles, half crying.

"And mine too," said Lord B., rising up.

Pickersgill passed the back of his hand across his eyes, turned round, and left the cabin.

"I'm so happy!" said Mrs. Lascelles, bursting into tears.

"He's a magnificent fellow," observed Lord B. "Come, let us all go on deck."

"You have not seen my aunt, papa."

"True; I'll go in to her, and then follow you."

The ladies went up on deck. Cecilia entered into conversation with Mr. Stewart, giving him a narrative of what had happened. Mrs. Lascelles sat abaft at the taffrail, with her pretty hand supporting her cheek, looking very much *à la Juliette*.

"Mrs. Lascelles," said Pickersgill, "before we part, allow me to observe, that it is *you* who have induced me to give up my profession——"

"Why me, Mr. Pickersgill?"

"You said that you did not like it."

Mrs. Lascelles felt the force of the compliment. "You said just now that you hated the name of Pickersgill: why do you call yourself so?"

## CONCLUSION

"It was my smuggling name, Mrs. Lascelles."

"And now that you have left off smuggling, pray what may be the name we are to call you by?"

"I cannot resume it till I have not only left this vessel, but shaken hands with, and bid farewell to, my companions; and by that time, Mrs. Lascelles, I shall be away from you."

"But I've a great curiosity to know it; and a lady's curiosity must be gratified. You must call upon me some day, and tell it me. Here is my address."

Pickersgill received the card with a low bow: and Lord B. coming on deck, Mrs. Lascelles hastened to meet him.

The vessel was now passing the Bridge at the Needles, and the smuggler piloted her on. As soon as they were clear and well inside, the whole party went down into the cabin, Lord B. requesting Pickersgill and Corbett to join him in a parting glass. Mr. Stewart, who had received the account of what had passed from Cecilia, was very attentive to Pickersgill, and took an opportunity of saying that he was sorry that he had said or done anything to annoy him. Every one recovered his spirits; and all was good-humour and mirth, because Miss Ossulton adhered to her resolution of not quitting the cabin till she could quit the yacht. At ten o'clock the yacht was anchored. Pickersgill took his leave of the honourable company, and went in his boat with his men; and Lord B. was again in possession of his vessel, although he had not a ship's company. Maddox recovered his usual tone; and the cook flourished his knife, swearing that he should like to see the smuggler who would again order him to dress cutlets *à l'ombre Chinoise*.

The yacht had remained three days at Cowes, when Lord B. received a letter from Pickersgill, stating that the men of his vessel had been captured, and would be condemned, in consequence of their having the gentlemen on board, who were bound to appear against them, to prove that they had sunk the brandy. Lord B. paid all the recognisances, and the men were liberated for want of evidence.

## THE THREE CUTTERS

It was about two years after this that Cecilia Ossulton, who was sitting at her work-table in deep mourning for her aunt, was presented with a letter by the butler. It was from her friend Mrs. Lascelles, informing her that she was married again to a Mr. Davenant, and intended to pay her a short visit on her way to the Continent. Mr. and Mrs. Davenant arrived the next day ; and when the latter introduced her husband, she said to Miss Ossulton, "Look, Cecilia dear, and tell me if you have ever seen Davenant before."

Cecilia looked earnestly : "I have, indeed," cried she at last, extending her hand with warmth ; "and happy am I to meet with him again."

For in Mr. Davenant she recognised her old acquaintance the captain of the *Happy-go-lucky*, Jack Pickersgill the smuggler.

THE END





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